

220
Elijah's Mantle :
OR, THE
M E M O I R S
A N D
SPIRITUAL EXERCISES
O F
M A R I O N S H A W. *N*

TOGETHER WITH
Some particular ADVICES to her Friends, inter-
sperfed with a variety of occasional ADDRESSES,
efpecially to the YOUTH.

Written by her own Hand, a little before her Death.

Whereunto is annexed,
A brief Account of the latter Part of the Life and Cha-
racter of the AUTHOR, who died, Nov. 5th, 1764.

Pfal. cxlv. 4. *One generation fhall praise thy works to a-
nother, and fhall declare thy mighty acts.*

Heb. iii. 13. *Exhort one another daily, while it is called
to day, left any of you be hardened thro' the deceitful-
nefs of fin.*

2 Kings ii. 8.---14. *And Elijah took his mantle, and
wrapt it together, and smote the waters, and they were
divided hither and thither.---And Elijha took up alfo
the mantle of Elijah that fell from him, and went back
and flood by the bank of Jordan, and smote the waters,
and faid, Where is the Lord God of Elijah, and when
he alfo had fmitten the waters, they parted hither and
thither.*

G L A S G O W:

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W. Musgrave.



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TO ALL MY
Dear Friends and Acquaintances,
Particularly in the Parishes of
NEW-MONKLAND and
SLAMANAN.

THESE two places are remarkable to me on several accounts, the first for my natural birth and residence for thirty-six years; the other I hope for my second birth; and the Lord hath frequently, in both places, manifested his special grace and providence to me, and implanted formerly and of late some concern for your welfare; and now he who both creates and fills the desire of the longing soul, hath, by his undeserved kindness and mercy, in the depths of his adorable providence, brought me into such unexpected circumstances, as to commit to writing some of his gracious dealings towards me. I therefore humbly and gladly offer the following small mite to your kind acceptation, meantime praying, that, "he who chooseth the weak and foolish things of the world," may bless it to you, for his own glory, when I am gone to eternity. I remain,

Your loving and dying friend,
MARION SHAW.

The PUBLISHER to the READER.

IT is generally agreed, that the lives of eminent saints are the most edifying and useful of all Biography, every one of them being a new additional confirmation and testimony to the truth and divinity of the Christian religion. "And as iron sharpeneth iron," so doth the laudable and amiable example of one Christian carry in it a secret and powerful efficacy to make impressions on fellow Christians, and even sometimes on them that are without. But it may be rationally objected, that there are already extant in the world, a great variety of books relating Christian experiences, every way better calculated for public use and benefit, than can be expected from such a weak, obscure and illiterate Author. But on the other hand it demands particular attention, that an old illiterate woman at the age of fifty eight years when the faculties are on the decline, should then learn to write, and commit to writing, facts and circumstances, thirty, forty, nay, fifty years ago, with such exactness and regularity, and that without the aid of any Journal or Diary whatever, such a remarkable providence, no doubt, merits a serious consideration. And besides, she herself gives a very rational and satisfactory account, how she undertook to write: it was not an enthusiastical notion, suddenly sprung out of the brain, but the result of a thing gradually carried on by the Word and Providence of God: moreover, we may observe, that even when Providence concurred with her desire and design, yet how careful and solicitous was she not to proceed to such an attempt without both a divine direction and encouragement. The Reader may further observe that the Author hath formed her narrative, and executed it with a design of publication, and this desire continued to the last, having two full years after the finishing thereof, calmly to reflect, and weigh the objections, which might arise against the publication, and after a particular survey thereof, not without apprehensions, that some might think, it was only from a fond conceit to perpetuate her name, yet she could freely in the views of death answer in the negative; and besides, this was one of her last requests on the brink of eternity. Likewise her friends and acquaintances, after her decease, urged their repeated entreaties for the publication hereof, knowing that she had left it as a Legacy chiefly to them. And after all, when the scope and intendment of the narrative is examined, it seems in a particular manner to be designed and adapted

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The Publisher to the Reader.

to promote the interests of real religion, both in its rise and progress. These are a few of the motives and arguments, which, after mature deliberation have prevailed with the publisher, to let these *Memoirs* come forth to public view.

Perhaps, it may be objected, that the Author goes beyond her sphere in launching out into digressions by way of Advice and Expostulation, but let it be remembred, that it was her ardent desire and constant endeavour to be some way useful, and judged this method not to be an improper expedient to promote such a design, which she had a happy talent for, and eagerly prosecuted throughout her life, as her friends and acquaintances can abundantly testify; and was the more animated thereto, from the consideration of the happy influence that the woman of Samaria's invitations had upon her friends and neighbours: besides the digressions themselves, are generally, natural, pertinent, moving and useful.

Tho' a polite or elegant style cannot be expected, yet the language is generally plain and easy, and so it was judged proper to continue the same, only with this small alteration, in connecting some abrupt sentences, together with the arrangement of a few facts and circumstances, more naturally with regard to the order of time, because some things in the course of writing recurred to her memory, which she had forgot, and was thereby obliged to mark them a little out of their proper disposition: if any shall doubt of the authenticity of these *Memoirs* now published, the only solution and expedient is to apply to the Author's acquaintances who know the certainty thereof, or the original Manuscript, yet extant.

Now as *Elijah* dropt his mantle, as a legacy to *Elisha*; so our Author a little before her departure, left the following narrative, a strong evidence indeed, of her faith and fortitude, amidst all trials and vicissitudes; it may not then be unworthy of survivors, *Elisha*-like, to take up this mantle, tho' of however small value in itself, yet being designed to remind us of *Elijah's* God, who abides for ever, and thus we all, in like manner, may in the faith of the true smitten and smiting *ELIJAH*, smite all waters of adversities, trials, and difficulties, in this pilgrimage-state, and at last in the believing prospect, that in the death of our great *ELIJAH*, the waters of the *Jordan* of death, are smote and fairly divided, and thereby a way laid open, to the ransomed ones, for a safe and comfortable passage home to *IMMANUEL'S* Land. May a double portion of that Spirit, which animated the Author, rest upon the Reader.

The AUTHOR'S PREFACE.

Dear Reader.

YOU will perhaps be surpris'd that ever I, a poor illiterate creature, should ever attempt to publish any thing to the world, especially considering there are such a variety of excellent books, already wrote by godly and learned men, not only in the doctrinal and practical, but also experimental kind: the objections indeed were many, and the difficulties great that lay in the way of my writing, because I could write none till arrived at the age of fifty eight years, (except subscribe my name) and considering my weakness both of body and mind, and unsuitness to express my scattered thoughts into intelligible words, together with the temper of the present age we now live in. But reflecting on the other hand upon the innumerable obligations I am peculiarly under to my God and Saviour, to undertake any piece of service, the Lord in his providence is pleased to put into my hand, who has formed me a rational creature, and brought me within the visible church, yea, I hope, which is infinitely more, within his church invisible, of being baptized in his name, and receiving a Christian education; and O when I think of the wonderful care of divine providence exercised towards me even to this day, and that ere long I shall put off this tabernacle, and enter into the gloomy mansions of the grave, where there is no remembrance of God; and having formerly some faint desires, of spending my
old

old strength in my good Master's service, with *Jacob* of old in blessing his sons, and recommending them to the God that had fed him all his life, and redeemed him from all evil. While I was thus exercised, providence brought to my hand, a book of the reverend Mr. *Willifons*, entitled the *Afflicted Man's Companion*, about the space of two years before I began to write, wherein are contained many useful instructions to old and dying people, to leave good advices to their children and relations, urged by examples taken from our Lord, scripture saints, and other Christians, all which excited my former desires. But at length by a dangerous fall, where my life was in jeopardy, the first thought I could command was, oh I have nothing left on record, of the wonderful love of God, and the care of his providence, towards me, for the encouragement and excitement of young people to get early acquaintance with Christ; and more than ever, that precept in the 78 Psalm, had superior weight with me, "That we ought not to hide God's laws, " but shew them to the generation yet to come, " the praises of the Lord, and his strength, and " his wonderful works that he hath done. For " he established a testimony in *Jacob* &c." My desires for writing were more and more sharpened, but was afraid to communicate my design, lest it would be thought foolish and extravagant notions in the brain; however I opened my mind, and got one to write a little for me, but my

my heart was like to faint for fear and so I laid it by for some time, yet a restless anxiety continued in my mind, not knowing what to do, I resolved to attend at *Lone-head*, the sacrament being then dispensed there, seeing it hath been the Lord's ordinary way with me, these many years, that whatever perplexities I was in, sooner or later to get relief from, or light about in public ordinances; when sabbath evening was come I could not say I had got any relief, but on Monday Mr. *Clerkson* preached on Psalm cv. 5. "Remember his marvellous works that he hath done, his wonders and the judgments of his mouth." He discoursed much upon the duty and exercise of remembering the works of the Lord, and observed "that it was a necessary and heavenly one, and the uninterrupted employment of the redeemed company above," my chief objection was my weakness to remember the works of the Lord, he answered, "put the Lord's work in his own hand." Mr. *Gib* preached next upon Psalm ii. 12. "Blessed are all they that trust in him." Both texts and discourses, through God's blessing, strengthened and encouraged me much to set forward in the way of present called-for duty. I resumed my former purpose, got some copies set, and learned a little to write, and essayed to stretch forth the withered hand, and take hold of his promise Isa. xli. 10. "Fear thou not, for I am with thee, be not dismayed, for I am thy God, I will strengthen thee, yea I will

The P R E F A C E. ix

“ will uphold thee, with the right-hand of my
“ righteousness; and to go out in his strength
“ and to make mention of his righteousness, e-
“ ven of his only.”

I am conscious, so far as I can remember, that what I have said is true, though accompanied with much weakness in myself every way, and very far from being so connect as it ought to have been, neither can it be expected, that I can give a particular relation of every remarkable occurrence, unless I had wrote in my youth: but all circumstances considered about my age, strength and situation, I hope the Christian and candid reader will not wholly reject it, because of its manifold imperfections and inaccuracies.

What I would aim at, is, to tell posterity such a covenant-keeping God I have had, for their encouragement, to come and taste and see that God is good, and to trust in him at all times however dark and desperate-like the case may be. O that I could persuade all, and especially young ones, from mine own experience, or rather may God persuade you, “ First to seek the
“ God and his righteousness, and all things shall
“ be added for his glory and your good;” It is more than fifty years since God began to restrain me from the sinful vanities and follies of youth by these forecited words. I think I can set to my seal to the truth of what Mr. *Binning* observes upon this text, “ If a kingdom were
“ set upon the one hand, and the things of the
“ world on the other, it would be most rational
“ to

“ to choose the kingdom; but when the king-
 “ dom is set before us, and all things necessary
 “ with it, a covenant-right thereto, and cove-
 “ nant-blessings therewith,” O how infinite is
 the disproportion! O that I could encourage
 parents, to be diligent to have their children early
 acquaint with their Bibles, which, thro’ God’s
 blessing, will be the best and most lasting porti-
 on you will be able to provide for them; and
 children to a diligent use of the holy scriptures
 in your youth, earnestly seek, with the Psalmist,
 that the Lord would “turn away your eyes from
 “ viewing vanities, and incline your hearts to his
 “ testimonies,” and give your young hearts to
 Christ, while he is graciously calling for them.
 I am now writing to you in my old age, under
 many infirmities, but I want words to express how
 sweet the thoughts of the places are, where the
 Lord first took a dealing with me. I would desire
 with a certain author, to bear in mind, not only re-
 straining, but conquering and pardoning mercy,
 since Christ forgets nothing of ours, but our sins,
 it well becomes us to record all his mercies; but
 who is sufficient for these things! I have been es-
 sayng to lay before you some few gleanings, that
 I have gleaned from my great Master’s field, for
 your encouragement to come and glean also:
 glean, did I say, yea, rather feast on such vari-
 ety and plenty. O do not attempt to feed on
 the world and its vanities! I assure you, they
 will be miserable comforters, when you come to
 a sick and death-bed. If I had nothing else
 now,

now, I would have a poor feast of it; but how comfortable is it to be able to say with *David* in his old age, "Although my house be not so
" with God, yet he hath made with me an e-
" verlasting covenant, well ordered in all things
" and sure, and this is all my salvation, and all
" my desire, although he make it not to grow;"
or with *Jacob*, who talked of his *Bethel*
and *Peniel* visits, both for his own comfort and
the edification of others, and how pleasant and
delightful to say on solid ground in the trium-
phant language of the apostle *Paul*, "I have
" fought the good fight, I have finished my
" course, henceforth there is laid up for me a
" crown of righteousness, and not for me only,
" but for all them that love his appearance:"
and at last uninterruptedly and eternally to rest
our weary souls, fatigued by the continual war
with a body of sin and death, upon the bosom of
him who takes "the lambs in his arms, and
" wipes away all tears from their eyes."

But I shall conclude, fearing I have been too
tedious already; may that good Spirit which as-
sisted me to retain these things, and now to re-
cord them in my old age, much more accompany
the reader, and make you know something "of
" the love of Christ that passeth knowledge."
O young ones! be encouraged to give your
young hearts to Christ, and he will honour you
to serve him in your old age, and "bring forth
" fruit when others fade." I add no more, be-
ing now for the most part confined to a sick-bed,
and

and knows not but it may be a death-bed; I commend my dear friends and acquaintances, these few lines, and all into whose hands they may come, to the grace of God, and the care of his providence, trusting that my good Master, who in the days of his flesh, had so much compassion on the bodies of men, and made a little provision through his blessing, feed many, much more abundantly feed your souls, and make these few lines which he hath wonderfully assisted me in, and can as easily preserve them for his own glory, which is the mark I desire to aim at in this and my other duties, if my heart deceive me not. All from

Your sincere Well-wisher
in Christ,



M. SHAW.

SAUCHIE - RIDGE, }

August 10th, 1762. }

E R R A T A.

Page 19. Line 24. for John read James. P. 30. l. 9. omit : after it. P. 32. l. 9. meaning three years of her Christian life. P. 35. l. 23. after in, insert I was. P. 38. 28. after removed make a point, leave out by, and put a point after Scot. P. 51. l. 4. for articles read blessings. P. 91. l. 16. for elements read ministers. P. 21. l. 3. for ii. read xi. P. 23. l. 12. for so, read lo.

[Containing the space of 20 years.]

It cannot be expected that I am able to afford a particular and full enumeration of God's early and kind providences towards me, as I now labour under the daily decays of nature, and growing infirmities of old age; but only to mention a few remarkable instances of God's preserving care, as I am informed, befel me when young; Being carried by a servant to my father's kiln, where I fainted, by reason of a violent blow upon the head, by the accidental fall of a piece of wood, and in this manner brought home beyond all hope of recovery: afterwards, there

were

were several solemn transactions, and gracious meetings in that same place, between God and my soul; well may I say, "Early was I cast upon his tender care."

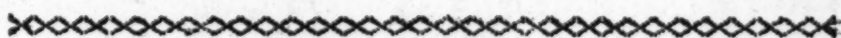
I was sent to the school in winter, and kept my father's sheep in summer; however the seeds of sin did early spring, having a comerade I then thought much better favoured than me, she enjoying her wishes, and obtaining her freedom and liberty, and I at home confined, or sent abroad to feed cattle; thus envying her prosperity; but a kind providence it was to me, for being oft in the fields out of the view of all others, save the Omniscient eye, I took my catechism along with me, and learned better alone than at school, and also my bible, when I first began to notice the promises and threatnings, the one to the righteous, and the other to the wicked, which was a mean to restrain me from many evils I saw practised, and was inclined unto; but when I met with my old comerade again, my fretful disposition returned, and was ready to call in question God's promises, such an envious temper of mind I was long troubled with, and too much indulged, so that since I can scarce either read or hear the lxxiii. Psalm, but I must blame my own folly, and remember the kind providence of God.

The scripture that the Lord did first impress upon my mind, was in Matth. vi. 25, and downwards, which I desire young people often to read, when anxious about, and too ready to join in conformity to the vain and sinful customs of the times, and likewise it may be very useful, both for old and young, when tempted to mistrust God for necessary provision, temporal or spiritual: "Seek first the kingdom of God and his righteousness, and all things shall be added." O promise pregnant with the most noble, large and lasting blessings!

I then

I then had seldom opportunity of attending public ordinances. Once hearing our minister, Mr. Wiseman, after the sacrament, exhorting much to prayer, at least morning and evening, ejaculatory prayer thro' the day at our lawful employments, and that in so doing we might link the whole day together in prayer; I was convinced in my mind it was a duty, and essayed to put it in practice; but alas! I fear not from a true principle to a right end, yet I never did after that, slight secret duty, but I had a challenge from my conscience. Being then about sixteen years of age, I heard a minister preach upon Prov. viii. 17. "I love them that love me, and those that seek me early shall find me;" at which time part of the xxxiv. Psalm was sung, "O taste and see that God is good," &c. Both of which made some impression on me.

So much for a short sketch of God's providential dealing with me in the first nineteen years of my life, I should rather have said Age. Glory to God for his free, sovereign, rich grace and mercy, that did not let me rest here.



SECOND PERIOD.

[Containing the space of 26 years.]

I AM now to relate some things more particularly, not only with regard to restraining grace, but also God's conquering grace and mercy. In the year 1720, and twentieth of my age; about this time my sisters were all married, and I remained alone with my parents; whereupon I dreamed of more ease, freedom and liberty, being elevated with the hopes, and prospect of sensual enjoyments; O praise and glory

be to God, who so suddenly disappointed my hopes, and fulfilled not my desires ! but mercifully prevented me, by that worthy servant of Christ, Mr. Bennet, minister of the gospel in Moring-side, at the sacrament of Slamannan, 1720. I attended upon the fast day before the sacrament, and remember only one thing that one of the ministers said, " That there " would be joy in heaven, if there should be but one " young man or woman that would repent at this " occasion ;" I presently thought with myself, that should not be me, which I desire to record to the praise of rich and free grace, and to my own shame, that took me not at my word ; but upon the sacramental sabbath afternoon thereafter, I was powerfully wrought upon by the Spirit of God, from that memorable text, Rev. iii. 20. " Behold, I stand at the " door, and knock : if any man will hear my voice, " and open the door, I will come in to him, and will " sup with him, and he with me." I was set a trembling, and made to look upon myself as the only person that kept Christ at the door, and was holding up weapons of rebellion against the Son of God ; glory to his ever blessed Name, that powerfully and irresistably overcame my hard heart, and rebellious will, who opened the door of my heart himself, and made me willing to ly down at his feet, and be at his disposal. There was another remarkable scripture, which was accompanied with power upon me, in that ever memorable night, 2 Cor. v. 20. " Now " then we are ambassadors for Christ, as tho' God " did beseech you by us, we pray you in Christ's " stead, be ye reconciled to God."

And now, upon a back look, I must, I cannot but confess, and subscribe, not only to the power and grace of God in opening the door of my obstinate and wicked heart, but also his faithfulness to his divine promise, in condescending to sup and sympathize with

with worthless me, under all the various providences, prosperous or adverse, he has seen meet to exercise me with, and made me sup with him, in giving out necessary supplies of grace, wisdom and strength, for directing and supporting me, under all the various temptations, trials and afflictions I have been trysted with: these have been sweet scriptures to me, and are so unto this day. O that the power may be exerted upon the inhabitants of that place and others, that accompanied my heart that night, it would make you change thoughts of the world and precious Christ. O young ones, be persuaded to hear Christ calling at the door of your hearts for admission; Is not "his head filled with dew, and his locks with the drops of the night?" For his blessed Name's sake, and for your precious soul's sake, put his own work in his own hand, "who opens and none can shut, "shuts and none can open," and if ye had a taste of this goodness of God, all the most refined delights, and enjoyments of sense, would be but empty and sapless.

Satan and the workings of my deceitful heart mustered up many objections, such as that it was too soon to be religious, that I might take some time to enjoy the pleasures of youth, and that it was better never to have a profession of religion, than to be an apostate: I ought to bless the Lord, he suffered me not to yield, but enabled me to set forward in his Name and strength, and made me that very night resolve to prepare for going to the Lord's table at Cumbernauld, the sacrament being dispensed two months after this; however I was in a great strait what to do, the tempter and my carnal reason said, it was needless for me, to go to the Lord's table this year, for I could have no opportunity next year; the reason of this was, it being the custom with us not to communicate, except in our own church; I had no

prospect of doing it there, because my mother punctually attended herself, and ordered me to wait upon the house; besides Cumbernauld and Slamanan sacraments were only once, in the space of two years; but the dying command of our Lord, "Do this in remembrance of me," had great weight with me, which I was induced to think might be done in another, as well as our own congregation: this I record for the encouragement of young people, not to consult too much with events, but labour to know what is present duty, and immediately comply with it, in much humility and self-denial, leaving God to unravel difficulties, and he will bring all to a comfortable issue in his own time and way; however I told my case to no person, but went to Cumbernauld upon the fast day. Mr. Robe began first, and prefaced upon the li. Psalm, and preached upon 1 Cor. v. 7. "Purge out the old leaven, that ye may be a new lump." then Mr. Hastie upon Jer. iv. 1. "If thou wilt return, O Israel, saith the Lord, return unto me;" and Mr. Anderson in Falkirk preached in the afternoon upon Gen. xxxv. 2. "Then Jacob said unto his household, and to all that were with him, put away the strange gods that are among you, and be clean, and change your garments." Verse 2. "And let us arise, and go up to Bethel, and I will make there an altar unto God, who answered me in the day of my distress, and was with me in the way which I went." These texts and discourses very much edified and encouraged me.

I returned upon Saturday, and was still impressed, that it was my duty, to attend at the Lord's table to-morrow, but as our minister was not there, I had not an opportunity of receiving a token, and besides I had not revealed my case and design to any person; but under this distress and anxiety of mind, the Lord who is always a very present help in time of need, so
order-

ordered that my eldest brother in the evening came and took me out from among the multitude, and unexpectedly gave me a token; and as we went home together, he charged me to give myself away to the Lord, which I judged to be my duty, and accordingly went to my father's kiln, formerly mentioned, and there, I hope, willingly gave myself away to the Lord, and took him for my all for time and eternity.

I attended on Sabbath, and received the seal of the covenant, where my kind and gracious Lord, was pleased to admit me to his sumptuous feast. Mr. Robe's action text was in Song viii. 1. "O that thou wert as my brother that sucked the breasts of my mother." I remember one word of caution which Mr. Robe younger expressed, when serving a table; he exhorted them to be upon their watch, for Satan would be at their heels, so soon as they went out at the church door, which made a great impression upon me, to watch, lest I should turn with the dog to the vomit. Yet I felt a strong party in me, thinking I had got a hard master, and would have a confined and melancholy life; but was greatly encouraged by the good instructions, and religious example of my uncle, John Young in Cumbernauld, where I staid all night, his family made a moan for him, that he would be wearied (being one of the elders of the parish) he answered no, he desired to be thankful, he was never wearied in his good Master's service; when he made family worship that night, he sung the beginning of the ciii. Psalm. I never in my life was witness to see a man sing so cheerfully; this, with other encouragements, I received from that truly Christian family, thro' God's blessing, had a very great tendency to banish my former fears. On Monday Mr. Telfer and Mr. Ewing preached; the one upon Song ii. 3. "I sat down under his shadow with great delight, and his fruit was sweet to my taste." The other on
Joshua

Joshua xxiii. 8. "But cleave unto the Lord your God, as ye have done unto this day," which refreshed and excited me much. And now, upon a review, I must acknowledge the remarkable interposition of divine providence in every occurrence; and from the experience I have had of God's goodness, but what is it to the infinite ocean! O I would desire others to taste of his goodness, especially young ones: be persuaded to give him the heart: it is the best and the worst you have, but for as bad as it is, he will gladly accept of it, "Son, give me thy heart." Seek that the Lord may shape out your hearts, for receiving a whole Christ, as he is offered in the gospel, and then in him, all the promises will be to you yea and Amen. He is still waiting to be gracious. O will you give such an unspeakable, loving and love-worthy God, a nay-say! I hope no. O Sirs, it is good to come in speaking terms with Christ; the woman of Samaria spoke cold like to him, when she refused him a drink of water; but or ever he parted with her, he made her willingly run his errands. And you who are entering upon the ways of religion, be not discouraged, altho' you meet with difficulties; commit your way to the Lord, and his wisdom will contrive, and power effect what is best; for all his divine attributes are as so many impregnable walls of defence, and all his promises as so many inviolable bonds of security for you; and do not foolishly, yea wickedly, think as I did, that Christ is a hard Master; for neither the tongue of man or angel can tell, how gracious, how kind and sympathizing he is; he himself will always be with you in your pilgrimage here, and at last safely conduct you to the flowery banks of Immanuel's land, there to abide with him for ever; but why should "I darken counsel with words, without knowledge?" Taste and see, will tell best.

About

About this time I got the proof Catechism, and had considerable pleasure in learning it by heart, especially some scriptures, the one in Luke ii. 13. "If ye then
" being evil, know how to give good gifts unto your
" children, how much more shall your heavenly Father
" give the Holy Spirit to them that ask him?" which was a mean to set me a praying for the Holy Spirit of truth, to lead and guide me into all truth, and I dare not say, but he has fulfilled with his hand, what he promised in his word; the other in Prov. ii. 1. "My
" son, if thou wilt receive my words, and hide my
" commandments with thee, so that thou incline thine
" ear to wisdom, and apply thine heart to understand-
" ing. Yea, if thou criest after knowledge, and lift-
" est up thy voice for understanding: if thou seekest
" her as silver, and searchest for her as for hid trea-
" sures: then shalt thou understand the fear of the
" Lord, and find the knowledge of God." These words were a mean to prompt me to a diligent use of the means appointed by God, for attaining knowledge, and I have found it not a vain thing to serve the Lord, who never commanded any of the seed of Jacob to seek his face in vain. I also bought Pierce on death, and thinks now I have got some good of it; for about that time, I was much impressed with the fear of death, which made me somewhat tender in hearing the gospel, when exhorted to duties, especially that great and leading one, believing in Christ. I was sometimes under terrors of death, and powerfully impressed to embrace the present call, lest I should never get another opportunity. In the prime of my youth, I was much confined at home with my old mother, being helped to comply with this happy providence, and have reaped much benefit from it, diverting myself learning questions, Psalms, and chapters. I have been many times grieved to see young people so fond of carnal company, and so soon weary of solitariness, I having found
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so much hurt by the one, and benefit by the other. At a time upon a Sabbath, providentially hearing a part of Mr. Welwood's letters read, containing good advices to his friends, which had some impression upon me, especially one to a sister, exhorting her to much diligence in reading the scriptures, and to pray, at least three times a day, which duty I could never since neglect, without a challenge from my conscience.

Several providences interveening until the next year 1721, which I shall not here relate. This year I had no opportunity of joining at a sacrament nearer than Kilsyth. I was very solicitous to be there, having heard good news from it, designing to attend upon the fast day; I was afraid to tell my mother, lest she would be against me, but calling to mind, there was a fair day near approaching, where some of my acquaintances usually attended; I desired leave to go to Kilsyth fast instead of the fair, which was readily granted.

Mr. Telfer preached upon Hof. x. 12. "Sow to yourselves in righteousness, reap in mercy: break up your fallow ground: for it is time to seek the Lord, till he come and rain righteousness upon you." He spake much about the great sin and danger of stifling convictions, and said "These were greater murderers who crucified convictions, than those who murdered their own children." I was greatly troubled, being convinced it was my duty, to come and join at this occasion; I had great difficulty in attending, my mother was displeased with me, fearing bad company, and not being the custom then in our place for young women to attend on distant sacraments, except upon sabbath-days; however I could get no rest, being persuaded God and conscience was calling me to go, and altho' it was my duty to obey my parents, yet only in the Lord, and to obey God rather than man. I have now forgot how many sacraments

ments I attended at Kilsyth; if I rightly remember three fast days, and heard four action sermons of Mr. Robe's, only I desire to bless the Lord that I ever saw the place. O but these were pleasant and lively days of the gospel, which I hope many yet can attest to the truth of it, as living witnesses thereof. Passing many others, I shall only relate some of the most remarkable passages which the Lord most eminently blessed for my good. I was never witness to such a frame in a congregation, as during Mr. Robe's sermon, and serving the first table, when he preached upon Isa. xxv. 9. "And it shall be said in that day, so this is our God, we have waited for him, and he will save us: this is the Lord, we have waited for him, we will be glad, and rejoice in his salvation." Some of that auditory whom I knew, proved true and lively Christians to the day of their death. Mr. Clerk in Glasgow, had a remarkable caution to communicants, which made an impression on my mind, and was very useful to me in my after-conduct: he said, when serving a table, "O communicants! take heed, how you walk, for there will be many eyes upon you, the eye of an omniscient God has been witness to your vows, and will see how you perform; the eyes of the godly will be upon you, and it will be a dagger at their hearts, to see your slips; the eyes of the wicked will be upon you, they will say, behold such a person made a great profession such a day, and their practice is like ours, or worse." I wish it had been more observed by me and others. I delighted much in hearing Mr. Telfer in Kirkintilloch, he once preached there on Monday, on 2 Cor. ix. 15. "Thanks be unto God, for his unspeakable gift." He treated much upon the excellency of that unspeakable gift, and of the way and manner how we were to express our thankfulness to God for Christ, he said, he was not calling us to the pulpit to preach, but every one

one in their several stations and relations, to do all the good they could, for the glory of God, and the good of their souls, and cited Dan. xii. 3. "They that be wise, shall shine as the firmament, and they that turn many to righteousness, as the stars for ever and ever." Which made a great impression upon my spirit, and has had an influence on me ever since, in some degree, to bestow my time and talents for God and the good of souls. It was there I heard Mr. Alexander Moncrief first; he preached upon a preparation day in Song iv. 8. "Come with me from Lebanon, my spouse, with me from Lebanon: look from the top of Amana, from the top of She-nir and Hermon, from the lions dens, and from the mountains of the leopards." I thought it was a very remarkable sermon. When he came to the application, he spoke much to commend this glorious ME in the text, and most earnestly expostulated with us to go with this Immanuel. The xlv Psalm and 10 verse was sung, "O daughter, hearken and regard," &c.

Mr. Scot in Glasgow preached next upon these very words, "O daughter," &c. And these were the words sung in our family in the morning, before I came away from home: it was with difficulty I got attended; but I thought this a double call, and I hope not without power. O blessed exchange! Sacraments instead of fairs! This was a sweet preparation day to me. Mr. Moncrief had his text Gen. xxiv. 58. "Wilt thou go with this man?" and on sabbath, connected it with Isa. liii. 3. "He is a man of sorrows." He said he was come to this brae-side in suit of a bride to his Master's Son, the true Isaac, and as a faithful messenger, he warmly intreated, and earnestly expostulated with us to go with the man Christ, by the most powerful, alluring and convincing motives and arguments, so that divine power went along with

with them, "the power of the Lord being present to
 "heal." At another time I heard a most satisfactory
 action sermon of Mr. Robe's, in Psal. lxix. 4. "I
 "restored that which I took not away." There was
 one scripture in Hos. ii. 6. I heard cited at Kilsyth,
 viz. "I will hedge up her way with thorns, she shall
 "follow after her lovers, but she shall not overtake
 "them, she shall seek them, but shall not find them,
 "then shall she say, I will go and return to my first
 "husband, for then was it better with me than now."
 O this hath been a most useful scripture to me, and how
 much of the accomplishment of this promise have I
 seen? both in hedging up my way, and many a time
 when my harlot heart, pursuing other idols and lovers,
 and being happily disappointed and frustrated of the
 enjoyment, made me remember this scripture. One
 time, when unavoidably detained from Kilsyth, being
 very desirous to go, I looking afar to it, on the sab-
 bath morning, with the tear in mine eye, that scrip-
 ture came in my mind, Psal. xxvi. 8. "Lord, I have
 "loved the habitation of thy house, and the place
 "where thine honour dwelleth." Which they told
 me were the words of one of the ministers text that
 day; from hence I observed the wonderful kindness of
 God, that when shut up from access to public wor-
 ship, he blessed these words of my meditation, the
 same with the text, to my spiritual comfort and edi-
 fication. Some time after this, I was in a very un-
 healthy state of body, and little hope of recovery, ei-
 ther by myself or others: and on a time going to
 Cumbernauld to use some means for that purpose, in
 meditating on the way, upon the pleasant days I had
 formerly enjoyed at Kilsyth, thought with myself, shall
 I be able to attend this season? That word came to
 me, "I will revive thee as the corn." Which made
 me resolve thro' the strength of grace, to go, if I had
 any measure of health; accordingly I revived a little

and was strongly convinced, that it was my duty to go there. When I went upon the preparation morning, the congregation were singing these lines.

*I'll pay my vows now to the Lord,
before this people all, &c.*

which confirmed my resolution to come back to the solemnity, but many almost insuperable difficulties presented themselves in the way, which is tedious to narrate; however the Lord brought me over them all. My body was weak, little appetite for food, but a great thirst. I rose early on the sabbath morning, to seek for a well, and got one, and remained there a considerable time; that passage of scripture, 1 Cor. x. 4. afforded matter of pleasant meditation, "And did all drink the same spiritual drink: (for they drank of that spiritual Rock that followed them: and that Rock was Christ.)" I came to the place of public worship, being very desirous to hear the action sermon, but was afraid of going into the church, because of the disorder in my body, I seated myself without at a window, and heard Mr. Robe discourse most satisfyingly, upon the subject of my morning meditation. Many other texts and scriptures I heard at Kilsyth, that were, and are, very pleasant and useful to me; but are not convenient to give a full relation of them. But I desire to bless the Lord I ever saw the place, and that he has given me an opportunity of writing my mind to you of the young generation, and tell you of his love and kindness, and the care of his providence. Satan is bidding me spare my pains, it will be to no purpose; but what is sown in weakness, the Lord can raise in power. Many a piece of service, he has taken off my hand, tho' performed with many infirmities, and I desire to believe, that he will yet do for his own NAME's sake. I am persuaded it is present called-for duty, and the

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the more weak, worthless, and unwise I am, and have been, the more will it redound to the praise of free, sovereign grace and love, that ever thought on me in my low estate, and manifested towards me the care of his providence, or accept of any of my poor endeavours to serve him.

Having narrated a few hints of the Lord's kindness towards me at Kilsyth; I now return to the year 1722, which was a very remarkable one to me. I had, for a considerable time, found corruption very strong, and grace weak, notwithstanding of what my kind and gracious Lord had done for me. I went this year to Slamanan sacrament, being both afraid and ashamed to go. Mr. Wiseman preached on the fast day upon Psal. xxxviii. 3. "There is no soundness in my flesh, because of thine anger: neither is there any rest in my bones, because of my sin;" a text and discourse which admirably expressed my present condition. Mr. Brown in Abercorn preached next, upon these inexpressibly comfortable texts, John i. 29. "Behold the LAMB of God, which taketh away the sin of the world." 1 John i. 7. "The blood of Jesus Christ his Son, cleanseth us from all sin." These were soul-refreshing scriptures, under my disconsolate case. Mr. Brown, in the forenoon, shewed the typical resemblance between Christ and the scape goat, and in the afternoon discoursed upon the virtue and efficacy of Christ's blood, in cleansing from the guilt, filth and power of sin; O the glad news, not only to hear of freedom from the guilt of sin, but also from the power and pollution of it.

O my dear friends, abstain from all appearance of evil; the Lord was found of me who sought him not, in this place before, and had been kind to me in other places, yet I may speak it to my shame, that thro' corruption within, and temptation without, I was very unlike my profession; but glory to God, that brought

me to this place again, and manifested so much of his love to such a sinful creature, in convincing me of sin; but not permitting me to despair of mercy, by setting forth his precious Christ, as a scape goat to take away sin; and as a fountain to wash such a filthy sinner as I was, and am; it was a blessed fast day, and the prelude of a glorious feast day. Before the communion, I was reading Doolittle on the sacrament, where he speaks of casting open the everlasting doors of our hearts to Christ, and having the soul hung with the tapestry of the Spirit, in order to be a fit habitation for Christ. O I longed for such preparation, being convinced it was work above my power; I was helped to put the Lord's work in his own hand, who has said, "I will work, and who shall let it?" Upon the preparation day, Mr. Anderson preached from Isa. xxv. 6. "And in this mountain shall the Lord of hosts, make unto all people, a feast of fat things, a feast of wines on the lees, of fat things full of marrow, of wines on the lees well refined." A most refreshing and encouraging sermon! I was helped to believe that the morrow would be a good feast day, and was not disappointed, for I may truly say, it was the warmest sun-shine day of the gospel ever I felt. Mr. Bonner in Torphichen said, when serving a table, May be some poor thing is saying, "this is the most blessed day that ever they saw." Which was the very thought of my heart; mark it then, said he, it is the 27th day of May, 1722. Mr. Glog, when serving a table, said, May be some poor thing is saying, if you ask my name, it is legion, for legions of vain thoughts lurk in my bosom; I also thought this was my name, for vain thoughts were never such a burden to me all my life before. Mr. Anderson preached in the evening from Luke xxiv. 32. "And they said one to another, Did not our hearts burn within us, while he talked with us by the way, and while he opened to us

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“ the scriptures?” He shewed various ways of quenching this spiritual fire; and that a common method people took to extinguish this fire was, by throwing the mire of the world upon it: he said, “ Did not your hearts burn within you, when ye took the bread? Did not your hearts burn within you, when ye took the wine?” Which I felt as really as ever I felt the breath of life in my body, in such a manner as I never had before on a communion day, nor since. I returned on the thanksgiving-day, as well it became me. Mr. Glog preached from Gal. v. 16. “ This I say then, walk in the spirit, and ye shall not fulfil the lusts of the flesh;” I was greatly afraid how to return to the world again, and wished with old Simeon to be away with the armful I had got, for mine eyes had seen his salvation. That worthy servant of Christ, Mr. Bonner, preached next, from John xvii. 11. “ And now I am no more in the world, but these are in the world, and I come to thee. Holy Father, keep thro’ thine own name those whom thou hast given me, that they may be one, as we are.” He treated much about the spiritual privileges of believers, especially Christ’s commending them to the Father’s tutorship and management, while in this world; he cited many comfortable scriptures from Christ’s farewell sermon, in the three preceeding chapters, but particularly one in his intercessory prayer, which I have often seen made out to me, viz. “ I pray not that thou shouldst take them out of the world, but that thou shouldst keep them from the evil.” He mentioned several reasons why the Lord’s people were not immediately removed out of the world, when brought into a state of grace; one was, “ That they might glorify God on earth as well as in heaven; have their faith and other graces tried and exercised, and the greater the hardships in their journey heavenward, the more glory to God, and the sweeter

“ heaven, when they arrived there: another reason,
 “ Christ must have a church militant as well as a
 “ Church triumphant, and that the Lord’s people
 “ heré, is a seed to serve him, in being made instru-
 “ mental in the conversion and edification of others.”

At the close, he baptised a child, and bound the parent to keep family worship morning and evening, which smote me, being conscious of our culpable neglect of it: sometimes in the morning, I was troubled how to speak of it to my parents, one thing was and is a great weight to me, and ought to be matter of deep humiliation and lamentation before God; I had always been burdened with sleep in time of evening worship, and thought for me to pretend such a zeal for morning exercise, who made such a bad use of it in the evening, would be looked upon as the highest pitch of hypocrisy. But I have it to remark to the praise of God, that it is upwards of thirty years since, and never eight days together, without family worship morning and evening. O observe with me, the grace and mercy of God, who had formerly surprized me in this place with his love, and notwithstanding of my provocations, graciously brought me back again, to get a Bethel visit. O how did he act the wise Physician’s part, by opening up my smarting wound, and with that same tender hand, applying the sovereign and healthy balm, even his own precious blood, and what is still more, under the character of an indulgent Father, and kind-hearted friend, admitted me into his “ banqueting house, and his banner over me was “ love.” O let us not think he is a hard Master. He has been a good and loving Master to me, but I have been a faithless and rebellious servant to him. How often have I quarrelled with him, for taking such singular steps with me, which hath, notwithstanding, been all in love. I think I have desired that I might be helped Caleb-like, to bring up a good report of
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Christ and the gospel, Oh that it were more so ! What small mites I ever contributed for that purpose, was not from myself, but from the grace of God, and the accomplishment of his promises ; he said to me, " Thou art my servant, in whom I will be glorified ;" and a most memorable sermon I heard Mr. Bonner preach from Num. xiv. 29. " But my servant Caleb, because he hath another spirit with him, and hath followed me fully, him will I bring into the land, whereunto he went, and his seed shall possess it ;" which had a great impression upon me. O young ones, give up your hearts to Christ ; he is above and beyond all commendation ; it is truly said in Proverbs, " What is his name, or his son's name, who can tell ? It is he only that can commend himself ; go to him and tell him he has promised his Spirit " to take of the things of himself, and shew them unto you," John xvi. Tell him he has promised, Isa. xxxiii. 17. " They shall see the King in his beauty ;" do not fear, many a time he has done more than he promised, but never less. O study to be well acquainted with your Bibles, and the promises therein, and to know your case, and the promise that answers it, and go to a throne of grace, and plead the accomplishment of it, and always be drawing a bill upon him. he will not forget to answer it, altho' " the vision tarry, wait for it, it will surely come, it will not tarry." Or rather, has not God, so to speak, drawn so many bills of promises already subscribed, and presenting them unto us, saying, what is thy petition, and it shall be granted ? Let us not think him a hard Master. Is not the security good enough, and the sum large enough ? I AM THE LORD THY GOD. O, what would we have more ! Mark how suitable that text in John was to my present case, when so much afraid of returning to the world, and the care of my Lord and Husband, in sending his servant to tell me, he

he had committed me to the care and tutorship of his Father, and that he prayed not that his disciples should be taken out of the world, but kept from the evil thereof, which gives me boldness, and good encouragement to repeat in faith the same prayer, when my divine Lord and Master has done it before me. A Christian life is not an idle life, nor such a melancholly one as many take it to be. Thus far for a few hints of the first three years of my life.

Having for some time run in the ways of God's commandments, with some enlargement of heart, meeting with some comfort from God, both in public and private, being exposed to little company at home, I enjoyed a great pleasure in learning by heart (while employed at my secular business) questions, psalms and chapters, &c. But while down in this valley of fears, amidst a thousand blasts of different kinds of force and fraud, both from without and within: happy they, who as watchful and valiant soldiers, stand girt with that noble armour; and how ready are we, being fatigued with a journey, harassed in a storm, or weary with a battle, and then enjoying some sweet repose, to turn remiss and negligent, and behold the watchful enemy easily slips in and takes the advantage; thus it was with me; the mighty and deceitful nations of the Canaanites were yet in the land, an evil heart of unbelief, Satan's agent, asking me, what was the need for all this strictness? slack your hand a little, and go not to so many sacraments, and confine not yourself so much at home; go to some fairs, and other public places of diversion; why? because better folks than you attend at some of these occasions; thus unacquainted with the wiles of Satan, and the deceitfulness and treachery of my heart; and alas what know I of them yet! yielded to these mischievous solicitations, and tried to be neighbour-like; but alas it was a dear down-sitting

to me; I cannot tell what others make of it, but for me I was the shadow without the substance, could take pleasure in no duty, and had a sinful hand, in provoking the Lord to cast me into the deeps of desertion and affliction.

In this perplexing state that scripture in the lxxiv. Psalm, verse 9. haunted me oft. "We see not our signs, there is no more any prophet, nor among us any that knows the time how long." That passage in 2 Pet. ii. from verse 20. to the end, oft cast up to me. "For it had been better for them, not to have known the way of righteousness, than after they have known it, to turn from the holy commandment delivered unto them," &c. I then heard Mr. Hastie lecture on Heb. x. 26. and downwards. "For if we sin wilfully, after we have received the knowledge of the truth, there remaineth no more sacrifice for sin," &c. and also at that time he was preaching upon Psal. lxxxix. 11. and downwards. "O that my people had hearkened unto me, and Israel had walked in my ways!" These were very rousing and awakening scriptures and discourses to me; this was in the winter season, and indeed it was a winter time with me, and at a very low ebb, going mourning without the sun. Oh what shall I say, his works are like himself! O the pains he was at with me, to have me brought back again, both in public and private: I like a lost sheep went astray, but he sought and found me out, and how seasonably did he step in for my relief, and made my extremity his opportunity. After many struggles and tossings, upon a sabbath morning, I went to Slamannan church, resolving to hope in the Lord, and to wait about his hand. A minister from Ireland preached from Psal. lxxii. 5. "My soul wait thou only upon God, for my expectation is from him." He mentioned several proper seasons for hoping in God; one was, when

when sin and iniquity abounded in a land, and when the Lord was hiding his face from his church. Isa. viii. 17. "And I will wait upon the Lord that hideth his face from the house of Jacob, and I will look for him." Another season was, when the soul is in the dark about its own case. Isa. l. 10. "Who is among you that feareth the Lord, that obeyeth the voice of his servant, that walketh in darkness, and hath no light, let him trust in the name of the Lord, and stay upon his God." Words fail me to express how suitable this subject was to me, and how reviving and strengthening these texts were to my languishing soul. Mr. Hastie stood up at the close, and said, May be some poor thing has got a meal to day. I was sure I was the person. This was a resurrection day from my spiritual decay, and I was enabled to read and hear with pleasure. O the height, the depth, the length, the breadth of the love of Christ, which passeth knowledge !

O sirs, do not hearken to the suggestions of Satan, the allurements of the world, and the corruptions of your own hearts ; so as thereby, dreadfully to dishonour God, and hurt your own souls ; opposing God's word, contradicting the dictates of conscience ; and when at any time, you are overtaken, and fall into such a dismal case ; oh do not despair, or give way to unbelief, for this is to add sin unto sin, and still more provoking ; but immediately fly to the blood of sprinkling, that cleanseth from all sin. O let precious youth, precious health, and precious time, be all spent in precious Christ's service ; and beware of unnecessary going to fairs, weddings, or other diversions ; for however pleasant now, they will be bitter in time, or, Oh dreadful to think, thro' eternity. O for a life like Christ's, who was neither ill employed, nor unemployed !

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I was for the most part privileged with health of body, till the 24th year of my age; being then seized with a great cold and cough which brought on consequent distempers, and was thereby greatly weakened and extenuated; I was thought to be presently dying both by others and myself; being somewhat troubled at first, I often thought upon Hezekiah's reluctance to die at God's command; I was helped with some calmness and serenity to acquiesce in God's holy will; my only ground of comfort was, that Christ was my husband, and the new covenant my contract; the world, and all things in it bulked very little in mine eyes. However, it pleased the Lord, in his infinite wisdom, beyond my own and others expectations, to recover me a little, but I remained tender and weakly: one way the Lord took, to keep me about his hand, was to exercise me with the rod in some shape or other. I have always found to sweet experience, that he has more consulted my wants than wantonness. I continued several years, in an unhealthy and languishing state, yet even in this condition, there were some ground of hope given me for my recovery; and some work the Lord was to employ me in, under this dark exercise for some months before Slamannan sacrament. In this low case I went there, and was confirmed that it was my duty to believe, and hope against hope; particularly from a scripture Mr. Robe cited, Mal. iv. 2. "But unto you that fear my name, shall the Sun of Righteousness arise with healing under his wings, and ye shall go forth, and grow up as calves of the stall." O, I thought that was a suitable promise for me, for I needed both soul and bodily healing: the only thing in the world I had a pleasure in, and desired to go forth to, was hearing the gospel. O how much of the accomplishment of that promise have I seen since. At the same occasion, upon Monday, Mr. Bonner preached from Luke xvii.

33. "Remember Lot's wife;" he observed three things to be remembered concerning her, viz. "Her mercies, sin and judgment. Her mercy, in having a godly husband, which is a singular favour, tho' little prized; for many people, if they obtain riches and honour, they will match with others, tho' little inferior to the devil in wickedness; and another of her mercies, she was led into God's secrets, the destruction of Sodom being revealed to her as also, to remember her sin, in looking back: her judgment, in becoming a pillar of Salt." This text and discourse made a strange impression on me, and haunted me like a ghost wherever I went; I am in a strait how to record, what I met with at this occasion, which, with some other things, was the spring and rise of a twenty years dark, and singular exercise. I was there powerfully made to believe, that the Lord would bring me into this corner of the world, where now I am. At night, when I stood up at the close of the discourse, feeling the present weakness of my body, the want of health was a strong objection to the believing of future things, but was silenced by that word, "Abraham considered not the deadness of his own body, nor that of Sarah's womb, but judged him faithful that had promised." For many years, Providence appeared quite contradictory to the promise; unbelief said all was dark and improbable; faith said, Grant so to carnal reason, but read the promise, and all is sure and not impossible; and besides, what tended to strengthen and confirm faith and patience, were two scriptures which haunted me very close, the one in Habak. ii. 3. "For the vision is yet for an appointed time, but at the end it shall speak, and not lie, tho' it tarry wait for it: because it will surely come, it will not tarry." The other in Psal. cxlv. 19. "He will fulfil the desire of them that fear him: he also will hear

“hear their cry, and will save them:” In this puzzling exercise, which obliged me more carefully to read the scriptures, with other practical books, and found great benefit from both; for I was often tempted to call the promises delusions, especially concerning temporal mercies. I, at that time got two books, which proved very useful to me, viz. Mr. Andrew Gray on the Promises, and Mr. John Brown’s Life of Faith; these I say, were means in the Lord’s hand to convince me of the great duty and advantage of believing the promises, as also to let me see that it was the Lord’s ordinary way to exercise and try his people’s faith with cross providences, before the accomplishment of the promise. This happened twenty years before I came to this place, and God only knows, what kind of exercise it has been to me.

Young people, who are fond to have your fortune read, come to Christ who is the way to the Father, and he will let you in to his secrets, so far as it shall be for God’s glory and your own good. Some time before this, when other young people would have me to join and to get our fortunes read, (as it was then named) I was struck with hesitation, being persuaded it was not a duty to enquire at the oracles of the devil for God’s secrets; for if he pleased, he could tell me himself. O what shall I say more to encourage you to come to him; he not only can tell you what dark steps are in your way, but has promised to go thro’ them with you. O how good a thing is it to get acquaintance with him in your youth, and then he will be ever at your right hand, that you be not moved; to support you, comfort, protect and direct you; ye had better be in a hot furnace of affliction with him, than in a king’s palace without him.

O inhabitants of Slamannan! my bowels yern with compassion towards you, when I reflect on the Lord’s kindness in that place, so frequently manifested to

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me.

me. I have sometimes thought, has the Lord no service for me in this place, where he has done so much for me? O my dear friends, be entreated to lay to heart seriously the words I heard your old minister, Mr. Hastie, preach from. "Walk in the light while you have it, lest darkness come upon you." O how invaluable a blessing is an honest faithful gospel minister! and thrice happy they who welcome God's kind message of salvation. May you all constantly remember, and keep upon your hearts with godly fear and jealousy that awful, but heart melting sentence which Christ wept over unbelieving Jerusalem, Luke xix. 42. "If thou hadst known, even thou, at least in this thy day, the things which belong unto thy peace, but now they are hid from thine eyes." O that God would turn away his anger in turning us from our sins. I commend you to God, and to the word of his grace, which is able to build you up, and give you an inheritance amongst them that are sanctified by faith that is in Christ.

I return to New Monkland, the place of my birth and residence about the space of thirty six years. I was above twenty times examined by the reverend Mr. Wiseman at his yearly examination; O how much sown, and how little reaped! I had not an opportunity of attending on our own sacrament, for the reasons formerly mentioned; however, some years after, these impediments were removed, by one of our ministers helpers, Mr. Scot. I had great satisfaction in hearing him preach, being usual for him to conclude the work in the Sabbath evening. The first time I heard him preach there, was from 2 Sam. xxiii. 5. "Altho' my house be not so with God: yet he hath made with me an everlasting covenant, ordered in all things and sure: for this is all my salvation, and all my desire, altho' he make it not to grow." He asked if there was any article of the

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the new covenant we would have excluded, or any more included, or whither we were pleased with all the articles thereof, just as they are, to which my heart said, Amen, for I never saw such a beauty and excellency in the New-covenant, all my life before; and many a time this has been a sweet text to me since. I could relate many other of his texts, but I forbear; he exhorted us very much to examine ourselves, and adduced many clear and distinguishing evidences of true grace. Mr. Cullen also preached there, who was a rousing minister: I heard him discourse from Eph. i. 7. "In whom we have redemption through his blood." He gave us nine or ten marks, to know if our names were written among the living in Jerusalem: "Did you ever undergo the pangs of the new birth? Was you ever brought to say, If I die, it shall be at God's door, where never any perished? Are you lovers of God, and do you evidence it by keeping his commandments? Do you love the brethren, not in word only, but in deed? Are you praying persons? Are you crucifiers of the flesh with the affections and lusts thereof? Are you such as do hunger and thirst after righteousness," &c. He offered Christ to all in the most urgent and pressing manner: I have reason to record it to my shame, that I thought it easier hearing in some places than others, because they were not so pressing to receive Christ; but when the Lord determined me by the power of his grace to receive Christ, as offered in the gospel, I was made to see my folly; but why should I say this? how much of that folly and wickedness remains in me? He is despised and lightly esteemed; I was helped to apply some of the foregoing marks, especially that one, crucifying the flesh with the affections and lusts thereof. Something occurring in providence that day, which verified it; which I shall record to encourage

young folk to forsake the sinful customs of the day, and be tender of the Sabbath. It was a prevailing practice among too many of us then, at the dismissal of the congregation, in time of the interval, either to enter the ale-house, or retire in companies together, and seldom the turn of conversation, befitting the time and occasion. I thought any day in the week might be better spent at home than at the church, upon Sabbath, according to our practice: and when I read the Confession of Faith, with Durham on the fourth commandment, my uneasiness increased; but being loath to be singular, I joined sometimes, but my conscience always accused me; however, this very day I am speaking of, I was determined to break off from these sinful customs, over the belly of corruption within, and temptation without. I went out my alone, and essayed to be some otherways employed. This I narrate to encourage young people to make it their study to conform their hearts and lives, only to the word of God; for I can tell you from experience, I had more solid satisfaction that afternoon in hearing and applying these marks, than of all the alluring sins and vanities of the world.

I was often refreshed there, especially at sacramental occasions, and our minister gave us many excellent rules, and directions, to walk according to our profession, and to have a conversation becoming the gospel. I shall relate a few texts of scripture I heard discoursed upon by our minister, which were very useful to me then, and many times since: First, in a lecture from the xix. Psalm, where he treated much of the solid comfort that arises to believers from the many and precious promises contained in that psalm, suiting their various exigencies, especially those promises of protection and preservation from the sinful customs of the time, and the errors and delusions of the

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the age. I was helped in some measure to apply for myself, and has seen and felt the accomplishment thereof to my sweet experience; likewise some texts at sacramental thanksgivings, as Job xvii. 9. "The righteous also shall hold on his way, and he that hath clean hands shall be stronger and stronger;" this was a suitable support for faith, being at that time much afraid, that tho' I had set out in a profession of religion, I would not persevere. Another in Rom. xiii. 13, 14. "Let us walk honestly as in the day, not in rioting and drunkenness, not in chambering and wantonness, not in strife and envying. But put ye on the Lord Jesus Christ, and make no provision for the flesh to fulfil the lusts thereof." A third in Eph. v. 15. "See that ye walk circumspectly, not as fools, but as wise; redeeming the time, because the days are evil." And lastly, Phil. i. 27. "Only let your conversation be as becometh the gospel." These preached upon thanksgiving days, with many more, all loudly calling to humility and watchfulness, which alas! was too little practised by us then, or yet, among all sorts of gospel hearers. O the pains the Lord in his infinite wisdom hath been at with me, by his word and spirit, providence and conscience, public and private, enabling me, not only to receive Christ, but in some measure to walk in him, and that as the accomplishment of many promises, not for any worth in my person or performances, but all of free and sovereign grace, O what reason have I to lay my hand upon my mouth, and my mouth in the dust, and cry out Unclean, unclean; and am like the woman with the bloody issue, that defiles every thing where I go: but he has done, and will do, great things for his Name's sake, his Christ and promise sake. Tho' I have been a covenant-breaker, he is a covenant-keeper, and has kept me in his ways as he promised me. I desire to record

this to encourage young people to walk tenderly and circumspectly in their youth, and not to have an empty lamp of a profession, without a practice answerable thereto. O to have the life and power of godliness. "Godliness is profitable unto all things, having the promise of the life that now is, and that which is to come."

I likewise heard Mr. Law in Shotts, and was much instructed and refreshed by his discourses. I attended for the most part at the sacrament there during Mr. Law's ministry, with a great deal of satisfaction. Our minister, Mr. Wiseman, died, if I rightly remember, in the latter end of the year 1732, a very remarkable year to the church, in general, and to me in particular, there having been some uncomfortable settlements before, and a prospect of many more, on account of the new revolution of affairs that past in that memorable year, all which possessed my mind with fear of sharing in the dismal effects of some late unhappy transactions, and thereby be deprived of a faithful gospel ministry: the Lord is my witness, there was nothing under the sun I esteemed so much as the gospel. Mr. Currie was next settled minister of the Monkland, which occasioned me much trouble and anxiety of mind; and besides, what was very affecting and humbling, upon repeated trials, I could reap nothing of that spiritual advantage and edification which I had done formerly. Some may alledge, this was only prejudice; I will not pretend to free myself of prejudices and corruptions, neither is it a Christian practice to make severe personal reflections, far less is it my business, but I only barely relate this, to illustrate the plain reasons of my leaving Mr. Currie's ministry. This was a most perplexing time to me, and I was ready to think it was the darkest case I ever was in: my body in a very languishing condition, my mother lately dead, and thereby the charge

charge of the house committed to me, I neither had ability nor opportunity to hear the gospel where my heart would; but yet a burning hunger for it continued. And what was still more heavy and afflicting, to see the wounds that my Lord was receiving from his denominated friends; how heavy to think of the fair profession of friendship to Christ we made on communion occasions, and how few to vindicate his opposed truth and interest! But in this distressed condition, the Lord, who is always a very present help in time of need, as he has been many times, made my extremity his opportunity, gave me the view of some promises to comfort and strengthen me; one I heard preached by Mr. Henderson of Blantyre, Ma. xxx. 19. "For the people shall dwell in Zion at Jerusalem: thou shalt weep no more; he will be very gracious unto thee, at the voice of thy cry, when he shall hear it, he shall answer thee." The other I got in reading a sermon of Mr. Erskine's, some time after, which is immediately following, verse 20. being a word of comfort to those under intrusions, or afraid of being deprived of the gospel. The words are, "And tho' the Lord give you the bread of adversity, and the water of affliction, yet shall not thy teachers be removed into a corner any more, but thine eyes shall see thy teachers." I was helped to grip at the promise like a drowning person to a rope, and have seen much of the accomplishment of it since. O that my recording of this may be blest to others, to trust in a promising God, tho' you see no probability of the accomplishment, for the less of sense, the more room is there for faith. I had nothing but the bare word to hang by, and indeed it is enough, for as I related before, all external dispensations of providence seemed directly to oppose the promise.

In

In the spring, the Lord was pleased to recover me a little from my former languishing state, and the flux I was seized with, and gave me some more liberty; I wished to employ these talents for God, I had often heard of good reports from Whiteburn, and heard Mr. Wardrop with great satisfaction, and my desire increased more and more to go there, but it was matter of Exercise to me, to know whether it was a duty for me, considering the leaving of the Monkland, my father's unwillingness to let me go, my own weakness, the roughness and length of the way. I was helped over all these difficulties, and got that word, "Who art thou, O great mountain? before Zerubbabel thou shalt become a plain." I thought, Christ speaks of the queen of the south, coming from the utmost parts of the earth, to hear the wisdom of Solomon, and doth not discommend her for it; accordingly I set out for Whiteburn, the first sabbath of March, 1734. It was a true report I had heard, and I may safely say, that the half was not told, of what I found to be true. It was the Lord's ordinary way with me formerly, that in dark and difficult cases, he sent forth his servants to speak to my present exercise, as if I had made it known to them. I had, at that time, for my exercise, fear of sufferings, and Mr. Wardrop that day discoursed much upon the trials and sufferings we might lay our account to encounter with in this world, and what was most remarkable, the tempter, in my first journey thither, whispered, "You need not be so public now, for if a day of trial were coming, you will make less din with your religion." I had, a little before that, read of Satan saying to a man, he needed not be so busy praising God here, for he would never win to heaven to praise him. The man answered, If I shall never win to heaven to praise God, I shall praise him all I can on earth. I was helped to resist the temptation in the same manner; for I said, If I shall

I shall make little noise with my religion in a day of trial, I shall go out now in a time of peace. Satan is a cunning adversary, and loves to fish in muddy waters; but he is always in a chain, and God has promised "not to suffer us to be tempted above what we are able to bear, but with the temptation give a way to escape;" Mr. Wardrop, that day, spake seasonably to the case, discoursing on our sufferings for the cause and name of Christ, and what a temptation it was to make a Christian turn his back upon him, he said, "If a Christian should turn his back in a day of trial from Christ, he might say to them as a certain soldier said to his general, who ventured his life to save his, yet afterwards the general was about to slay the soldier, who replied, I did not so with you, at such a battle. So Christ might say to an apostatizing believer, I did not so with you upon mount Calvary." I had a great desire to be at Whiteburn before, but when once I had got a taste, it increased my hunger: I wrestled with many difficulties, for there was never a day, but Satan and unbelief would have hindered me some way or other, but I was wonderfully helped to set forward, and hope against hope, and desires to bless the Lord while I live, that ever I went there, for many a sweet meal I got. Some time after this, he preached at St. Lawrence * sacrament, from Psal. xxx. 7. "Lord by thy favour, thou hast made my mountain to stand strong, thou didst hide thy face and I was troubled;" he spoke much of the changes the Lord's people were liable to, and are daily meeting with; he had two remarkable words of caution and advice; first, "however God might vary in his dispensations towards us, to beware of thinking he was changed in his love; the
" other

* St. Lawrence is another name of the parish of Slamannan.

“ other was, to beware, when undergoing changes, of concluding we had no grace.” These cautions have been, and are very useful, under the manifold changes the Lord has seen fit to exercise me with, both of providence and frames. About this time, Mr. Wardrop and Mr. Erskine in Stirling were both gone to Glendovan sacrament. I was very desirous to hear worthy Mr. Hamilton, Mr. Erskine’s colleague, Sabbath being a very dark and foggy morning, I was in a great strait what to do, having never been beyond Denny church before; however I ventured out, having gone two miles, it darkened greatly, so that I knew not where I was, halting a little, old Jacob came into my mind, when on his journey, how he vowed, that if the Lord would be with him, and keep him in his way, the tenth of all he had should be his. I essayed to dedicate myself, and all that I had, or ever should have, to be the Lord’s; and he promised to be my God, and gave me that promise, Isa. xli. 10. “ Fear thou not, for I am with thee, be not dismayed, for I am thy God: I will strengthen thee, yea, I will help thee, yea, I will uphold thee with the right-hand of my righteousness.” So far as I understand, it was upon a part of the ground we now possess; I went on my way, the fog cleared immediately, and I heard Mr. Hamilton in Stirling with great satisfaction from Psal. xvi. 8. “ I have set the Lord always before me: because he is at my right-hand, I shall not be moved;” he said, “ the Lord was ever at the believer’s right hand to support him, to comfort, protect and direct.” This, with the forementioned promise, was very sweet to me, and always the longer the sweeter. O that I could speak and write to the commendation of that good God, who has done so great things for poor unworthy me, and for the encouragement of others to trust a promising God, and patiently to wait, for is he not a performing God?

I desire

desire to praise him for his tender care of me all along, but more especially at sometimes, and this one in particular, when he was calling me to wander like an owl in the desert; I desire to record this, as all his other ways with me, to the praise of his infinite wisdom, in bringing me into this strait, and that in the very place, where he was afterwards to bring me, and exercise me with many dark providences. O that I were humble for unthankfulness to my kind God, for all his gifts to me, and for quarreling with him for his singular way of disposing of me. I am his by creation, given to him in baptism, and early cast upon his tender care. I had been essaying sometimes formerly to devote myself to him, to be disposed of any way he saw most for his glory; but this time was more useful to me, since I came to this place, than all the rest. Next Sabbath I went to Stirling, and heard Mr. Erskine with great pleasure lecture upon the ixth of John, about the man born blind; he spoke of the excellency of spiritual light, for this poor blind man saw more of Christ, than all the learned Jewish sanhedrim; and that Christ could cure diseases by very unlikely means, for the means he used seemed more natural to extinguish one's eyes, than to open the eyes of one born blind; and likewise observed, that the fear of man causeth a snare, and how ready we are to shrink in the open confession of God and his cause, when it comes to the trial, for this man's parents made but a very sorry confession of Christ, notwithstanding of Christ's great kindness and mercy, in restoring their son's natural and spiritual sight. Oh how chargeable am I, and this generation with that conduct! Afterwards I heard him at Dumfermline preach on Isa. lxiv. 8. "And all thy children shall be taught of the Lord." He shewed the analogy "between Christ and a schoolmaster, and mentioned some lessons he taught them; and what kind of a master he was, "a tender

" a tender, meek and loving one, and one who takes
 " great pains on his scholars, especially young ones
 " carrying the lambs in his arms, and gently leading
 " those that are with young; he also spoke of some of
 " the means he used in teaching: and among others
 " he wisely taught with the rod; he said, we need not
 " fear that cross which drives us to our Bible and our
 " knees." This has many times since been useful to
 me. I likewise heard him preach at Bothkenner
 from John xi. 11. " Our friend Lazarus sleepeth,
 where he treated of the bonds of that union between
 Christ and his members, he observed, " that it was
 " great mercy to have friends to send word to Christ
 " when we are sick; and that we needed not doubt
 " of our relation to him, though in affliction; for
 " he affectionately owns it to sick friends; and as
 " merciful and compassionate High Priest, tenderly
 " sympathizes with his children, and exquisitely feels
 " the least touch his members receive:" " Saul, Saul
 " why persecutest thou me?"

There was no duty I enjoyed greater satisfaction
 and pleasure in, than hearing the gospel at Whiteburn.
 I attended there part of five years, and, for the most
 part, remember where Mr. Wardrop lectured and
 preached, during that space, when absent and present,
 what the weather and company, and above all, my
 various trials and exercises, and at the same time, how
 seasonably and exactly the minister was directed to
 speak to whatever case I was in. But to give a particu-
 lar account of every providence, changes external
 and internal, temptations, supports, reliefs and en-
 couragements, which occurred during that time
 would, I am afraid, both encroach too much upon the
 patience of the reader, and perhaps be superfluous.
 Only to mention a few, I heard Mr. Wardrop lecture
 from Mat. xxth, to the end, and the latter part of
 Mark, together with a few chapters in the last of
 Luke.

Luke's gospel; and from the beginning of the gospel
 of John to chap. xviii. as also from the beginning
 to the xiii. of the Acts of the apostles. He com-
 monly selected one of the verses of his lecture, for the
 subject of his sermon. In general, it may be worth
 the observing, that the church's case and mine shewed
 a near resemblance to one another, which made me
 often to admire, that when ministers discoursed about
 the case of the church, at the same time spoke so di-
 rectly to my particular one, which certainly as it was
 a favour to me, so a loud call not to prosecute the one,
 to the neglect of the other, but mutually give a con-
 stant and serious attention to both. The church, a
 little before this time, was in a dark and perplexed
 condition, and no great probability of recovery: how-
 ever, unexpectedly, it pleased the Lord to give her a
 reviving in her bondage. I was, likewise, then labour-
 ing under affliction outward and inward for some con-
 siderable time, yet at the lowest, promises were borne
 in upon me. "They shall revive as the corn." Psal.
 cxviii. 18. "I shall not die but live, and declare the
 works of the Lord. The Lord hath chastened me
 sore; but hath not given me over unto death." Likewise
 some other scriptures that were very refresh-
 ing to me in that afflicting season, which were ground
 of hope and encouragement, both for the church and
 myself. Job xxxiii. from ver. 19. to the end, also
 ver. xxx. from the 10th verse and downwards, and
 ver. xxxiii. 6. "Behold I will bring it health and
 cure." First and last, many a sweet promise I have
 not for the church and myself, and has seen much of the
 accomplishment of them, and always when the case
 was most desperate and hopeless like, then was the
 time, I was most stirred up to believe and pray. It
 has been the Lord's ordinary way, when seeming to
 strip me of mercies altogether, then to hold them out
 in the word of promise, and help me to believe, hope

and wait. O that I with the generation were more thankful to God, who graciously gives his rich promises, and faithfully accomplishes them, and in the mean time, not forgetting to be deeply humbled for the awful misimprovement of these unspeakable mercies and invaluable privileges!

Now when the Lord was about to accomplish his promises, he restored me more health and liberty, and put it into my heart to employ these talents for him in following the gospel. At the end of the year 1734, the aspect of providence to me was very dark, winter was come, and my kind Father not smiling on me as formerly, for he was very tender and sympathizing under my affliction, nor did he frown on me on account of any unwillingness for me to hear the gospel, but fear of bad company, and my weakly constitution, and this was one of the principal reasons he gave over the farming business, to allow me ease and rest, and when he saw I would take none, it vexed him, and grieved me: but however many obligations I was under to please and obey my affectionate father, I thought I was still under many more to please and obey my great Lord and Master, whose love is not foolish and fond, but wise and permanent: for he was not only kind to me in affliction, but it was love to me that made him lay me under the rod: what reason have I to wonder at his distinguishing love, in bestowing so many words and rods upon the like of me, for tho' he had broke the strength of corruption in a day of power, yet there remained an hankering after the flesh pots of Egypt. What reason have I to be humbled for the sinful hand I have had in provoking the Lord to visit my transgressions with rods, and my iniquities with stripes? And this is an evidence that I have been a poor stubborn and rebellious creature, "For he doth not afflict willingly, nor grieve the children of men." And this, at the same time, is one of the strongest proofs

proofs of his love, for he says, " Whom he loves he chastens. And if ye be without chastisement, then are ye bastards, and not sons," and blessed be his name, it is one of the sweet articles of the new covenant. What good reason have I to say with the Psalmist, " I know, O Lord, that thy judgments are right, and that thou in faithfulness hast afflicted me." He said to me in my youth, " He would hedge up my way with thorns, that I should not find the path of my lovers." And he has been as good as his word.

I have reason to wonder, that I have not been erected as a lasting monument of his just displeasure, for the many dreadful back-looks to the world and other lovers; the heart melting kindness of God is astonishing, that brought me into a wilderness of affliction, and there was graciously pleased to speak so comfortably to me; O the sweet fruit he hath caused the crabbed tree of the cross to yield! " Oh that men would praise the Lord for his goodness, and his wonderful works to the children of men!"

I still laboured under darkness and perplexity of mind, to know what was present duty, concerning my attendance at Whiteburn, considering a variety of opposing circumstances, formerly narrated, and yet the restless hunger and thirst continuing, which could not be satisfied at home; in this perplexing state, the great Teacher himself gave me his divine word of promise, " They shall be all taught of God." I was helped to plead, that he would teach me by his word, Spirit and providence, otherwise than any could do; this winter I am now speaking of, Mr. Wardrop lectured on the sufferings of Christ, I had often read and heard of that subject formerly, but was never taught in such a manner before. About that time, these words in Phil. i. 29. haunted me often, " For unto you it is given on the behalf of Christ, not

“ only to believe on him, but also to suffer for his
 “ sake,” and was helped to plead conformity to him
 in his sufferings and death : and accordingly, the Lord
 was pleased to assign me something of a Christ-like
 cross, as temptations, afflictions, reproaches, and de-
 sertions, &c. But alas ! what reason have I to be
 humbled for the want of that faith, love, meekness,
 patience, self-denial and holy fortitude, which be-
 cometh the Christian character, and the followers of
 the Lamb. While I heard these lectures upon the
 sufferings of Christ, the Lord, in order to humble me,
 made me to undergo some sufferings of a similar na-
 ture, and so by this faint resemblance, instructed me
 more concerning his divine sufferings, which tended to
 make a deeper impression upon me.

It was Mr. Wardrop's usual way, in prayer, to
 mention several cases of the Lord's people : I remem-
 ber one morning's prayer in particular, when he spoke
 of six several cases, which ; I thought, every one of
 them exactly expressive of my own. “ Perhaps some
 “ of thy people is in the dark in this wilderness, and
 “ knows not whither they are going backward or
 “ forward, O let them see where they are ; for thou
 “ says, thou leads the blind in a way they know not.
 “ May be Satan has got some of thy people into his
 “ sieve, and is sifting them, O let not their faith fail.
 “ Some of thy people are like to be overcome with a
 “ body of sin and death ; make them to say in faith,
 “ I thank God, through Jesus Christ our Lord.
 “ Perhaps some of thy children are ashamed they
 “ cannot love Christ more. O that thou wouldst blow
 “ up the spark into a flame. Some of thy people
 “ wishesthere were a chink in the clay cage, to let
 “ the bird of paradise get home, O that thou wouldst
 “ direct their hearts in the love of God, and the pa-
 “ tient waiting for his Son Jesus Christ. Perhaps
 “ some of thy children cannot get thee served as they
 “ would

“ would desire, being fettered with a frail body of
 “ flesh and blood. Grant that according to the
 “ riches of thy glory, they may be strengthened by
 “ thy Spirit in the inner man, unto all patience and
 “ long-suffering with joyfulness.” Each of these
 were peculiarly adapted to my circumstances; for I
 had been a considerable time under darkness, concern-
 ing sin and duty; particularly about attending at
 Whiteburn: and likewise, Satan had presented his
 temptations to me, both in an artful and cunning
 way, and in a monstrous and hideous form, and thro’
 the strength of temptation without, and the
 power of corruption within, I was like to faint and
 give over; and in the course of my reading of Flavel’s
 works, which has been a singularly useful book
 to me. The Saturday before that Sabbath, I had
 read a sermon therein, on the love of Christ, which
 made me greatly ashamed for want of love to him,
 and gave me an ardent desire for love to him. The
 Lord is my witness, I had a desire to depart from this
 clay cottage to be with himself; and with respect to
 the last case, altho’ I was a little revived, yet many
 times, thro’ the infirmities and disorders of the flesh,
 the activity of both soul and body was cramped and
 fettered in the service of God. I was often troubled
 with temptations, which especially opposed my attend-
 ance at Whiteburn; if I had been absent any space of
 time thro’ necessary avocations, as sickness in the fa-
 mily, &c. The tempter would have addressed him-
 self thus, “ You have remained a considerable time
 “ at home, you know not but the minister may either
 “ be absent, sick or dead; and besides, you will by
 “ your singularity, expose yourself as a mock and
 “ spectacle to the world; yea, what is more, by ven-
 “ turing out so frequently in the winter season, you
 “ will be a self-murderer.” At other times, I was
 tempted to be proud of going forward, and that this

was dear gospel indeed, and again the next thought, that it was dearer to Christ, so that it was almost a continued struggle. O how much drops has the least wind of a temptation discovered. Mr. Wardrop was then discoursing on Peter's denial of his Master, he observed "that Peter had too much self-confidence, a disease which the Lord's people are oft sick of, and that it was dangerous to be unnecessarily in the company of bad men, or receive benefits from them, for what can be reaped from them, but you will be some way infected thereby, or at least you will have a challenge in the conscience, for not shewing a dislike at such practices, and their favour and kindness was often purchased at the expense of religion." He also observed, "that God could and doth make use of small and unthought of means for the conversion of sinners, and reclaiming his own from their apostacy, as the crowing of the cock convinced, as a mean, Peter of denying his Master." He had a word of comfort to heartless ministers and Christians that were grieved, that their labours had so little apparent success. He said, "A word might ly like seed under the clod, a long time, and yet bring forth fruit, for Christ's words to Peter had a remarkable effect upon him afterwards;" which encouraged me under my present despondency, because of unusefulness, and made me essay to speak a word for Christ, trusting the event to himself.

He was a great encourager of people to follow a crucified Saviour in spite of all opposition, and observed from Joseph of Arimathea's being delivered from an evil under the sun, which many rich men are bound with, he had the world and power to serve Christ with it; so we who have means, time and other talents, should use our utmost influence to serve Christ with them, and be useful to one another, which

is an incumbent duty, as well as diligently to attend to our own soul's eternal interest. About this time he had a sister died, and the Sabbath thereafter he preached a most satisfactory sermon on death, and shewed the great advantage, and loss of godly relations, when they were gone, we lost their upstirring example, their sweet company and conversation, together with the help of their prayers, but that it was matter of unspeakable comfort to the true believer, that he had always his nearest and best friend, Christ, to continue for ever with him, and altho' the grave be the parting place of friends, yet the believer had Christ to go home with him, and from thence took occasion most seriously to expostulate with us to get Christ for our only and never-failing, beloved friend. O the wonderful grace and mercy of God, in determining any soul to close with Christ, and still to own his relation to his people, notwithstanding of all the sinfulness that attends them! Mr. Wardrop was then lecturing on the resurrection of Christ, and concerning the women that came early in the morning to see our Lord's sepulchre, this was sweet and encouraging to me in my wanderings, to think that love to Christ prompted these women, notwithstanding of dangers, and difficulty. They said, Who shall roll away the stone, yet they always went forward in the way of duty; many times have I found it so in experience, when meeting with opposition, in the way of present duty, being helped to go forward, the mountain of difficulties was immediately rolled away; O that I could be instrumental to stir up a young generation to wrestle much with God for a heart love to Christ, and a heart-hatred at all sin, and then all duties would become more pleasant, and difficulties less troublesome; and besides, what matter of encouragement is it that the hinge and great article of the Christian faith stands sure and immoveable, even the resur-

resurrection of Jesus : blessed be his Name that the most insurmountable of all bars are now removed ; " Mercy and truth, righteousness and peace have mutually kissed each other," to the glory of God, and the salvation of man ; and as a sure evidence of the final discharge of that debt, an angel from heaven is sent to roll away the stone, never more to return, which made way for another glorious proof both of that and his resurrection, even his ascension and glorification, and by his continual intercession dispenses and communicates by the promised Spirit those divine blessings of his purchase ; how encouraging and steadfast are the grounds of the Christian faith ! and how unreasonable and wicked a thing is unbelief ! O to be taught to rejoice in a risen Saviour amidst all these temptations, crosses and afflictions, and this body of sin and death ; for seeing the head is out of the grave and ascended, it will not be long till all the members follow also.

I had many times heard the gospel before, but was never so pressed in spirit as then, constantly to attend, getting each case so remarkably spoke to at Whiteburn if I refrained from hearing there, I was afraid thereby of provoking the Lord to leave me in the dark ; unbelief had almost, and did sometimes overcome me, by proposing plausible objections, especially in the short dark and stormy days of winter, and my appetite for food being very weak, so that often I could take little or nothing till I returned in the evening, but these were bright and clear sun-shine days of the gospel, and altho' frequently there was neither day nor moon light to convey me home ; yet how savoury and soul-refreshing was God's presence in his holy sanctuary, which abundantly compensated the want of some external accomodations. The minister was then preaching about Christ being the Sun of righteousness and light of the world, and gave some clear

marks

marks of those that had got a saving sight of this true
 fun, and a word of comfort to those who had got
 such a sight and longing for clearer views of it, viz.
 " They that had got a sight of Christ by faith, should
 " really see him as he is, but thou hast some dark
 " trances to pass before that time, the dark trance of
 " desertion, temptation, affliction and of death."
 About this time I was in the company of some peo-
 ple that were looked upon as heads of wit, who dis-
 coursed upon the subject of assurance of salvation, and
 asserted there was no such thing, this troubled me
 much, being younger than they, I thought it impru-
 dent to speak; however I had a sad challenge in my
 conscience for silence, and that so much the more,
 there being some persons in the company ignorant
 of the principles of religion, who might think, if
 assurance of salvation be not attainable, we need be
 at no trouble about it: I went to Whiteburn next
 Sabbath; Mr. Wardrop was lecturing in the begin-
 ning of the iii. chapter of John, where Christ preach-
 ed up the necessity of regeneration, and Nicodemus
 calling the same in question, he observed, " That
 " persons might be judged fit to govern church and
 " state, and yet be blind in the fundamentals of Christi-
 " anity; thus was it with Nicodemus, the Jewish
 " ruler; and that when he opposed the truth, Christ
 " confirmed it by a double asseveration, " Verily
 " verily I say unto thee, except a man be born again
 " he cannot enter into the kingdom of God:" from
 hence he observed, " That when we hear the truth
 " opposed, it is our duty to stand up for it:" I was
 more convinced of the falsehood of the former asser-
 tion; and my culpable bashfulness. Two scriptures
 abode in my mind, 2 Pet. i. 10. " Wherefore the
 " rather brethren, give all diligence to make your
 " calling and election sure." The other 2 Cor. xiii.
 5. " Examine yourselves whether ye be in the faith:
 " prove

“ prove your own selves ; know ye not your own
 “ selves, how that Jesus Christ is in you, except ye
 “ be reprobates ?” I own it is not necessary to the
 being of a Christian, to know they are in Christ, but
 it is so for their comfort and well being. We can-
 not make sure of health, wealth, friends, or life,
 but God be thanked we are called to make our cal-
 ling and election sure, and as a certain evidence of
 this, may we all know what it is by a true faith to
 say Amen to the blessed bargain of the new covenant,
 “ which is well ordered in all things and sure.”
 There hath been much contending among some
 Christians about the extent of Christ’s death ; but
 O ! that every one would examine whether it has ex-
 tended unto them, in such a manner, as to dethrone
 Satan, break the power of corruption, infuse grace,
 and establish Christ alone as king in the heart ; for if
 there were more heart and life reformation, a public
 and universal one would be more hopeful.

In the year 1736. I went with two younger bro-
 thers to a small farm in the parish of Slamannan, be-
 ing always accustomed before to plenty in my father’s
 house, but now removing to a new dwelling, I was
 afraid that we would not be furnished with necessaries,
 altho’ there was no ground for such a fear, but still
 that dreadful sin of unbelief and mistrust prevailed,
 and could get no rest ; but the Sabbath immediately
 after our removal, I went to Whiteburn, and the
 Lord, who is always a very present help in time of
 need, sent forth his servant, who was directed to
 speak particularly to my case, from Luke ii. 10.
 “ And the angel said unto them, Fear not ; for be-
 “ hold, I bring you glad tidings of great joy, which
 “ shall be to all people. For unto you is born this
 “ day in the city of David, a Saviour, which is
 “ Christ the Lord.” All my unbelieving fears and
 objections were fully answered by that word, “ fear
 “ not

"not;" for he was particular, not only in mentioning spiritual, but temporal mercies, so that I was made to wonder, and helped to believe, and have not been disappointed; for I may truly own, to his glory, he has performed with his hand what he promised in his word.

I have heard it observed, that sometimes the Lord gives his people for their exercise to doubt of those truths, he is about to confirm them more in; and I think I have frequently found it is so in experience: O the pains the Lord has been at with me, first and last, to remove me from all other refuges, and to cast all my cares and burdens upon him alone. I heard a minister once say, that people should do with their experiences, as some do with receipts they get from physicians, they not only use them at the present time, but also preserves them till afterwards, when sometimes they are both serviceable to themselves and others; what I got that day hath been many times useful to me since; for I have been oft tempted to mistrust a promising God for temporal mercies, and yet can there be any thing more unreasonable? What more satisfactory, for quieting all complaints than God saying, "He that spared not his own Son, but delivered him up for us all: how shall he not with him freely give us ALL THINGS?" Rom. viii. 32. At this time Mr. Wardrop was lecturing upon the fifth chapter of John, about the woman of Samaria, he mentioned two reasons why Christ returned with his disciples into Galilee and passed thro' Samaria, first, "it was a quiet place, where his disciples were nourished and fitted for greater trials, and because he had souls to bring to himself." I have thought this sometimes applicable to my removing to Slammannan. He observed, "That it was ay good to come in speaking terms with Christ, for the woman of Samaria spoke very cold-like, when she refused him

“ him a drink of water, yet before he parted with
 “ her, he made her invite all about her, to come unto
 “ him; and that here was encouragement, to be dili-
 “ gent about our lawful employments, for even then
 “ we might get a meeting with Christ, and in all
 “ companies we may providentially be in, we should
 “ study to imitate and learn of Christ, to glorify God,
 “ and edify one another; for when he met with the
 “ woman he spiritualized her water, and when his
 “ disciples came, he spiritualized their bread,
 “ and at the coming of the Samaritans, he spoke to
 “ their heart, so as they believed on him; he also ob-
 “ served, that the Lord withdraws sometimes from
 “ his people in a sovereign way, for he left the Sama-
 “ ritans, who were loath to part with him.”

In that same year 1736, I went to the sacrament of
 Dumfermline, under some dark exercises, my patience
 for the accomplishment of God's faithful promise
 was ready to fail, because of some interveening contra-
 dictory providences, and besides I had it for an exer-
 cise concerning my father's soul's eternal interest.
 Having observed a day for prayer and humiliation,
 set out upon Friday, and heard Mr. Thomas Mair
 preach a most seasonable sermon on Saturday from
 Mat. xv. 25. concerning the woman of Canaan that
 came to Christ on account of her daughter, “ saying
 “ Lord help me.” First, Christ answered her with
 silence, and then with a seeming denial, saying, “
 “ is not meet to take the children's bread, and to cast
 “ it to dogs.” Yet still she persisted, and got a good
 answer, and a large commendation of her faith; how
 often have I seen the out-making of that word. “ He
 “ sent his word and healed them?” The same year
 that sermon of Mr. Erskine's, entitled, *Dark provi-*
dences cleared in due time, was preached, which has
 been many times useful to me, under the various
 dark providences the Lord in his adorable providence

has seen fit to exercise me with. O these were pleasant and refreshing days of the gospel, which I hope many can attest, there was much liveliness, and a spirit of prayer and supplication. It was truly surprizing and desireable to see the unwearied and constant attendance of people upon all the ordinances and duties of religion, which was certainly an evidence and effect of the Lord's remarkable countenancing his own ordinances and institutions, and accomplishing his gracious promises. But how justly may the church's lamentation of old be resumed! "How is the gold become dim! how is the most fine gold changed! The crown is fallen from our head; wo unto us, that we have sinned!" It has the appearance of an evening season amidst all the plenty of external light; indolence and carnal security is become an universal plague: Oh! what more heavy and dreadful than unfelt spiritual judgments. There is some Achan in the camp amongst us, O! that every one of us would begin at our own heart, and search, is it I! O that the Lord would pour out a spirit of prayer and supplication, of mourning and turning upon all ranks, for if mercy and speedy repentance prevent not, the Lord seems to be fast coming upon these lands, especially upon this church and land, which has been as Capernaum, exalted unto heaven with privileges; what a heart-breaking thought is it, that a spirit of thankfulness, humility and unity, is at so low an ebb! But it is great ground of comfort to the church and people of God, that the angel of the covenant is yet making continual intercession, and as our great High Priest hath his church and people engraven upon the palms of his hands, ever to remember them; yea, upon his heart infinitely and unchangeably to love them. "And though the floods be lifting up their voice, and making a mighty noise, yet the Lord sits on the floods, the Lord sits King for ever. He has said in

“ the evening time it shall be light ; and when there
 “ is none shut up or left, I the Lord will help.”

I went also to Mr. Kid's sacrament in Queensferry, where I first heard Mr. Wilson in Perth, who appeared to have the cause of Christ much at heart ; he said, “ Christ would be back again to the heart of Scotland, he cautioned us much against errors and delusions, and from extremes on every hand, and frequently to read our confessions of faith, and larger catechism, together with that short, but excellent and comprehensive summary, the shorter catechism ; but above all, seriously and constantly to peruse and believe the HOLY SCRIPTURES, the only standard of principle and practice : he exhorted much to unity in the truth ; he said he did not expect a right union in the church, till a thorough reformation took place, and cited Isa. lii. 8. “ Thy watchmen shall lift up the voice, with the voice together shall they sing : for they shall see eye to eye, when the Lord shall bring again Zion.”

I was likewise sometimes at the sacrament of Torphichen. I heard Mr. Erskine in Dumfermline preach from Psal. xxix. 10. “ The Lord sitteth upon the floods ; yea, the Lord sitteth King for ever.” A text and discourse very happily suiting and encouraging to me in my down-cast case ; as also his brother in Stirling, from Psal. lxxxiv. 9. — “ Look on the face of thine anointed.” He observed, “ That as Christ was anointed above measure, so all the members of his mystical body are anointed in some measure ; he said, any of you that have got some of this ointment, ay be dropping it on your friends and neighbours at home, for the devil and his members are not unwilling of their ointment, they drop sometimes a lie, an oath, or a back-biting tale”. I have many times remembred this advice since, and thought, O that I could win to spend my body and spirit,

spirit, time and talents in God's service, as cheerfully as many seem to do in the devil's, but had no thoughts then of leaving any thing on paper, but the Lord has always been before hand with me: proud unbelief is ready to say, I would desire to do this and the other piece of service to Christ, but I am afraid he will not accept of it, what is this but to call the God of truth a liar? for what end is it he gives us so many calls and warm invitations to come and accept of him, if he were not willing to have us and our poor services to glorify him? Mr. Fisher preached from Hab. ii. 20. "But the Lord is in his holy temple: let all the earth keep silence before him." He gave some marks of true love to Christ; he said, "if we were true lovers of Christ, it would deeply wound and grieve us to see him wounded, if we were not thus affected, it was an evidence we were Gallio's, and indifferent about Christ's cause and interest." At another time I went to Torphichen, and had it for an exercise some considerable time, being under great fears of running to some dangerous extreme amidst the then shaking and dismal appearances of matters in the church. When I went into the church, Mr. Fisher in Glasgow was serving a table, he said, "Perhaps some are afraid of losing their way in this dark and cloudy day, tho' that be the case, be not discouraged, for here is a divine ground and support for faith," Isa. lv. 4. "Behold, I have given him for a witness to the people, a leader and commander to the people." This was a sweet scripture and relief to me, then, and many times since. I sometimes heard Mr. Bonner in his own church with great satisfaction, particularly once, when lecturing in Zech. vi. 9. and downwards, he observed, "That it was both our duty and honour to have the case of Zion at heart; the men that came from Babylon were no losers at God's hand, for all the toil and expence

"they were at." I was much impress'd in time of that lecture, that there would be a reviving of the Lord's work in these lands, especially when discoursing on these words, "Behold the man whose name is the BRANCH, he shall build the temple of the Lord, even he shall build the temple of the Lord, and he shall bear the glory."

I was at the sacrament in Torphichen another time, and having no minister or elder of acquaintance to apply to for obtaining a token, Satan and unbelief took the advantage, in order, to make me distrust God, and disturb my hearing of sermon, notwithstanding the Lord had wonderfully provided for me formerly. I had a sore battle; faith would fain have believed that the Lord would provide, but carnal reason and unbelief made great resistance to my gripping the promise. Mr. Ralph Erskine preached from Mat. xvii. 20. "for verily I say unto you, if ye have faith as a grain of mustard seed, ye shall say to this mountain, remove hence, and it shall remove, and nothing shall be impossible unto you." He observed, "That true active faith, be it ever so small, would remove mountains, be they ever so great; and spake of laying the staff of the promise on the mountain, by the hand of faith, and be the mountains of difficulties of whatever nature, or however great, they would thence remove." It was a seasonable word, when he said, "That faith was the eye-sore of hell," for I was just then feeling to my experience, Satan and unbelief making a violent struggle to keep me off the promise. Necessity obliged me to go home at night: I returned on Sabbath morning, and mentioned the circumstances of my case to a certain man; at that fourth meeting, Mr. Mair in Orwel first began, and preached from Joel iii. 21. "For I will cleanse their blood, that I have not cleansed; for the Lord dwelleth in Zion." It was a seasonable

a seasonable subject, for I was much troubled and perplexed at the blood-guilt the church and land had involved themselves in, and that of violent intrusions, as no small part of it; he mentioned various ways the land was guilty and defiled with blood, and among others, "the shedding of the blood of the saints formerly, and of late, so many foul-murdering intrusions." And indeed there is reason to fear, that the awful prediction of Christ, and real accomplishment thereof upon the Jews, be our doleful doom, and dismal condition, "That upon you may come all the righteous blood shed upon the earth, from the blood of righteous Abel, unto this present time." Mat. xxiii. 35. Oh! that the deep consideration of this, would suitably affect our hearts with a sense of our sins, and by his Spirit and grace lead to the precious blood of Jesus, which we have so awfully slighted and trampled upon, that alone can take away all sin. Oh! that foundation and capstone sin of UNBELIEF, is the ruin of this Christian land. But leaving this digression, I resolved to continue still, and trust providence once more, when I was sore tempted to doubt, I replied to the tempter, If I cannot trust God for access to his table at Torphichen, how will I trust him for access into "the ivory PALACES." I came out from among the congregation towards evening, and immediately found the man I spoke with in the morning, standing ready waiting to give me a token. My God never yet failed me, nor never will. When I went into the church we sung in the xlvth Psalm.

*She shall be brought unto the King,
in robes with needle wrought;
Her fellow virgins following,
shall unto thee be brought,*

*They shall be brought with gladness great,
and mirth on e'ery side,
Into the palace of the King,
and there they shall abide.*

Many a dash my unbelief has got, and this was one :
O that I could record it to the honour of my gracious
and faithful God, and for the encouragement of all o-
thers, that however dark and perplexing the case may
be, yet always to trust a promising God, for " He
" that trusteth in the Lord, mercy shall compass him
" about," Psal. xxxii. 10.

I came to Slamannan with my brother at Whit-
sunday, only with a design to remain some short time,
in the harvest thereafter, having a view of returning
to my father, I was desirous to know what was pre-
sent duty, thinking with myself, there should be an
imitation of the children of Israel in the wilderness,
who " at the commandment of the Lord, they jour-
" neyed, and at the commandment of the Lord they
" rested," being desirous to know the Lord's mind;
I was directed only to look up and wait. The Saturday
immediately thereafter, my father came to pay us a
visit, and not being very well, desired a bed to rest a
little, but his sickness increased, and continued only
the space of eight days, and then he departed this mor-
tal life. I was formerly under several fears about my
father, being afraid the world had too much of his
heart, but had got some relief as above related, and
now when he was apparently dying, the exercise was
more pungent and affecting. One day, when holding
up my father's head, and under deep meditation con-
cerning him, a word in Philemon, ver. 15. came with
power. " For perhaps he therefore departed for a
" season, that thou shouldest receive him for ever."
He shewed much calmness and tranquility of mind
upon his death bed, and expressed his hopes in the
free

free mercy of God, and that only on account, and for the sake of Jesus Christ, and with his dying breath commended and adhered to the presbyterian principles of Scotland, and his ancestors, whose father died a sufferer at Bothwel-bridge. I was wonderfully supported under this trial. At this time Mr. Wardrop preached several sermons from Song ii. 10, 11. "My Beloved spake, and said unto me, Rise up, my love, my fair one, and come away : for lo the winter is past, the rain is over and gone." He compared all our crosses and afflictions to winter storms, he said, "May be some poor believer is saying, I am getting good of all my crosses, and cares not for wanting them : well, believer, thou perhaps may get thy will, may be thou will never want the cross all thy life" He gave us some marks to know if we were getting good of the cross, he said, "when good metal is thrown into the furnace it makes it softer, but the oftener bad metal is cast into the fire, it grows the harder, so it is an evidence a Christian reaps advantage from his crosses and trials, when he becomes more humble and submissive, thinking meanly of himself, and honourably of God, justifying him in all his ways, believing his wisdom, goodness and love, altho not presently seen ; cheerfully submitting himself to God's holy will." He cautioned us to beware of security and stupidity under the cross ; as also of murmuring or discontent, he said it was like a knot on the back, it did not let the cross ly solid." Sometime before this, he preached from John iii. 31. "He that cometh from heaven is above all." He mentioned the several attributes of God, and how he is infinitely "above all," in each of them ; he said, "Poor believer, perhaps thou has lost a near and dear relation, or thy kind-hearted friend now looks towards thee with a squint eye, and hath a step-mother's breath ; but up with thy heart, he

" that

“ that cometh from heaven, is above all in unchange-
 “ ableness, who is the same yesterday, to-day, and for
 “ ever; thy true friend, that sticketh closer than a
 “ brother, one who loves at all times, and is a brother
 “ born for the days of adversity.” These indeed were
 useful advices then, and often since. O the grace and
 condescension of God! both to warn me of trials, and
 arm me for them. And now I found to sweet expe-
 rience, the truth of what the Psalmist sings in the
 xxviiith Psalm. “ When my father, and my mother
 “ forsake me, then the Lord will take me-up.” For
 in a little after my father’s death, some difficult cases
 in providence occurred, having neither father nor hus-
 band to plead my cause, but the Lord stepped in,
 and singularly answered to the name of a near kinsman
 and advocate. O how many obligations am I under
 to be well content to be managed any way that will
 most glorify him! O! young ones, get Christ in your
 youth, and then you will have him for your everlast-
 ing Father, your elder Brother, Tutor and Manager,
 Husband, and your ALL, for time and thro’ eternity:
 do not fear, he will ay answer to his name, be your case
 what it will.

I went frequently to Whiteburn that winter imme-
 diately following my father’s death, but Satan and un-
 belief never ceased to prosecute their unwearied de-
 sign of keeping me from my food: on stormy days,
 when tempted to faint and be discouraged, I was help-
 ed to repel the temptation, sometimes by reflecting on
 the sufferings which our fore-fathers endured when
 following the gospel, at a great distance, in the open
 fields under cloud of night, and at the peril of their
 lives. One time when going thither upon a very
 stormy day, when fore harassed, I thought this was
 nothing, besides what Christ had suffered for sinners,
 who came swimming in a sea of his own blood, to pu-
 blish this gospel to them, and passing by a loch in my

way:

way: the tempter said, "Well then, will you venture in that loch for him?" But I was helped to reject so odious a temptation with abhorrence; for as I once heard Mr. Hunter observe, when lecturing upon the vith of the Ephesians, "Let the temptations of Satan be ever so fiery, yet thro' grace, let them be thrown into the sea of Christ's blood, and they will all be effectually quenched." Mr. Wardrop lectured that day from the beginning of the viiith chapter of John; he had two observations, which were seasonable then, and oft useful since, viz. "That often the wicked are better accommodate than the godly, for the chief priests and Pharisees went away every one to his own house, but the blessed Jesus, who had no where to lay his head, retired to the mount of Olives." The other was, "That we ought to avoid needless dangers, and at the same time, when it was for the glory of God, and good of souls, we should venture out in spite of all hardships and hazards, for Jesus would not remain all night in Jerusalem, which was a nest of his enemies, yet returned early in the morning to teach the people." There were some scriptures remarkably useful to me then, when going to Whiteburn, particularly Isa. l. 6. and downwards. "I gave my back to the smiters, and my cheeks to them that plucked off the hair: I hid not my face from shame and spitting. For the Lord God will help me, therefore shall not I be confounded: therefore have I set my face like a flint, and I know that I shall not be ashamed, &c." Jer. xii. 5. "If thou hast run with the footmen, and they have wearied thee, then how canst thou contend with horses? And if in the land of peace, wherein thou trustedst, they wearied thee, then how wilt thou do in the swelling of Jordan?" Heb. xii. 4. "Ye have not yet resisted unto blood, striving against sin." These scriptures the

the Lord made singularly useful, in humbling me, that ever I should quarrel with my Lord and Master, who had suffered so cheerfully for the like of me, as also to animate and quicken me to press forward in present duty. I have frequently found an experience that when meeting with greatest difficulties to attend public ordinances, these were the times, when the Lord directed his servants oft to speak most remarkably to me.

In the year 1737, I was still remaining with my two brothers in Slamanan, but now the one being about to be married, and the other returned to our deceased father's house, who was desirous that I should go alongst with him, however, several considerations declined me from being willing to return, yet I desired to seek the Lord's mind and to wait for light from him, who hath said, "In all thy ways acknowledge him, and he shall direct thy paths," and accordingly was not disappointed. Mr. Wardrop was then lecturing on the xi. chapter of John, and from that word in the 7th verse. "Let us go into Judea again," I got my present duty cleared up, to return with my brother; he also had an observation from the 5th and 6th verses which hath been many a time useful unto me in dark cases. "Now Jesus loved Martha and her sister and Lazarus. When he had heard therefore that he was sick; he abode two days still in the same place," he said, "hence we may see, that the Lord often delays his coming, out of love to us." Surely I may say with Job, "By thy light, I have walked through darkness; and thy light hath shined upon my paths. This xi. of John was a pleasant chapter to me, out of which I got many a sweet meal, and remarks worthy the observation, passing many that might be named, I only mention one more; having a fellow-traveller, that was wont to go a much greater distance

for

for the gospel than I, my father being now removed by death, and more health and liberty granted me, I resolved to employ these talents for God, in following the gospel, yet it was matter of exercise and concern for me to know, whether the Lord was calling for it as a duty at my hand, and not Saul-like to adventure upon forbidden sacrifices. I had communicated my design to my comrade, and one day when sitting in the church in the morning before public worship, she informed me, that the sacrament in Abernethy was near approaching, and asked if I was resolved to go there, I replied, I am as yet uncertain; part of the lecture that day, were these words, "The master is come and calleth for thee," he observed, "there were secrets in God's family, which every one was not to know; for Martha called her sister secretly, to go forth and get a meeting with Christ." Before the lecture was finished, I was firmly resolved to go there, and told her my intention, and accordingly we appointed a place of meeting, but missed each other, however providence conducted me to the place, and the Lord was very kind and gracious to me there. O that I could relate these things to the honour of my wise and faithful "Leader and Commander." and for the encouragement, especially of young people, that in all emergencies of life whatever, you would look and wait on the Lord Jesus for direction and instruction, who hath said, "I am the light of the world: he that followeth me, shall not walk in darkness, but shall have the light of life." John viii. 12. It has furnished me with matter of grief and lamentation, sometimes to see persons very zealous to travel oft and far to sacraments, and yet so little time spent in preparation, or an agreeable subsequent life and conversation. I have conversed with some very judicious Christians, in the near approach of death and eternity, who bitterly

ly lamented, that communion guilt lay very heavy on their conscience, and it is to be feared, it will be a weighty load upon this generation ere all be done, however light and slight thoughts we may have of it now.

I went also to the sacrament in Kinclaven, and came up against the fast day, Mr. Alexander Moncrief preached in the afternoon, he said, "Is there any poor thing come here, like the nobleman who heard that Christ was come from Judea to Galilee and went to him on account of his sick son nigh unto death: hath any of you a sick soul, a sick family, a sick corner and country-side nigh unto death, come to Christ the physician with these diseases, He hath come from heaven to earth, from the Jewish church, to the Gentile church, from the west of Scotland, to the Highlands of Scotland." These words had a great impression upon my mind, and made me think and earnestly long, that seeing the Lord in his providence had brought us hither, would also be very gracious to us in the place and come to our country with remarkable power and presence, the place being distant and unknown to me, I had few acquaintances; upon Friday after the fast day, and before the sacrament, I retired to the back of a broom-hill alone, and yet truly not alone, for I got liberty to pour out my heart to God, and to wrestle for the Lord's return to the land, and our country-side.

The next sacrament I attended, was at Orwel: we that lived in the Monkland laboured under an inconvenience, not having then any dissenting elders or Christian Societies, to apply to for lines of recommendation, my comrade and I had been sometimes provided before by elders and acquaintances that knew us but at this time we had none to supply us, in this case, I sat down to hear the Lord's mind, Mr. Fisher,
that

that Saturday's evening, discoursed on the straits that Jacob was in when coming out of Padan-aram between Laban, and the approach of his brother Esau, he observed, "that in this perplexing state, Jacob's exercise was, to plead the promise, use means, and acknowledge himself unworthy of the least of God's mercies." I thought it a remarkable discourse, and such an exercise very suitable to our present circumstances, and saw no mean we could use, but only make known the case plainly to Mr. Fisher himself; accordingly we went and told him, he knew he had seen us at Kinclaven, and asked who supplied us there, and said he would do it at this time, but desired us afterwards to get lines from them who were personally acquainted with us, which is highly necessary and reasonable, but the Lord had in this a sovereign hand, and made our extremity his opportunity; thus the Lord, who is "righteous in all his ways" and holy in all his works," brings his people into straits and difficulties to glorify his own name, and thereby to try and exercise their faith with other graces, as also to shew them their absolute impotency, and the constant necessity of an humble dependance on the arm of Jehovah alone, but well may I kindly take with the challenge, "O fool, slow of heart to believe." Upon Monday's evening Mr. Wilson intimated a fast to be to morrow, some of the reasons thereof were, "that we might afflict ourselves before our God, to seek of him a right way," and to intreat the Lord's countenance and presence, in the observation of fasts through the Land. Mr. Moncrief discoursed on these words Mat. ix. 15. "But the days will come, when the bridegroom shall be taken from them, then shall they fast in these days." Mr. Fisher discoursed on the following words. "For I was ashamed to require of the king a band of soldiers and horsemen, to help us

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against

" against the enemy in the way, because we had spok-
 " en unto the king, saying, the hand of our God is
 " upon all them for good that seek him; but his
 " power and his wrath is against all them that for-
 " sake him. So we fasted and besought our God,
 " for this, and he was intreated of us." Ezra. viii.
 22, 23. . This was a memorable and pleasant day's
 exercise; they came over the firth in a little after,
 and several fast days were likewise observed in this
 country, and many evidences, that the Lord was in-
 treated of us at that time. I would desire to relate
 this to the honour of his name, for his singular care
 of his church in general, and me in particular, in so
 disposing of me, who had been so long confined by
 reason of bodily infirmities, and care of families, as
 to bestow more health and liberty, and calling me to
 that place, and at the same time to give me that for
 my exercise, to wrestle with him for his return, just
 at that juncture when he was about to do it. I re-
 member to have read of a mark to know, when we
 got a mercy as the answer of prayer in joining with o-
 thers, viz. " It was an evidence thereof when we
 " are helped to wrestle for it, just at the time, the
 " Lord was about to bestow it." But O what reason
 have I with the generation, to be deeply humbled for
 the cold reception he hath met with from us, and
 the many heinous provocations to leave and forsake
 us, as also to adore his infinite patience, that hath
 born so long with such an ungrateful, rebellious and
 unbelieving race. A little after, I heard Mr. Erskine
 at Stirling preach from Num. xxiii. 23. " Surely there
 " is no enchantment against Jacob, neither is there
 " any divination against Israel, according to this time
 " it shall be said of Jacob, and of Israel, what hath
 " God wrought!" this text and discourse was very
 supporting and encouraging to me then, and although
 I be a poor doubting creature, yet blessed be his name,

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his word the ground of faith remains stedfast; O to have faith fixed here, and so may ride safely at anchor amidst the ocean of tempests and hurricanes within or without, for although the ship may reel and stagger, yet because Christ prays, it cannot sink.

A second time I attended at the sacrament in Orwel, when in a very perplexed condition, and under much dispondency, I there heard a sermon of Mr Ralph Erskine's, from Rom. iv. 18. "Who against hope, believed in hope." From which I was powerfully helped to hope, and believe in spite of all contradictions; he spake of "faith laying hold of the promise, in a dependance on the veracity of the promiser; and hope looketh with firm expectation of all the promised good, and that true saving hope was just built upon the gulf of despair." Mr. Wilson preached also a very seasonable sermon, from that soul-strengthening, and heart-comforting text, Psal. xxvii. 14. "Wait on the Lord: be of good courage, and he shall strengthen thine heart: wait I say on the Lord." He observed, that the church and people of God, even after they have been essaying "to seek his mind, and to go out at his command, may meet with very great discouragements, and cited Judges xx. 18. and downwards, where the children of Israel enquired again and again of the Lord concerning their going out to war against Benjamin, yet they met with very discouraging providences, notwithstanding of the Lord's counsel and call, but they did not desist from their request, but the more earnestly enquired of the Lord a third time, and then obtained a compleat victory." From which I was helped to believe, that the Lord's mind to me, was to trust, hope and wait, and use means, mean time to reconcile contradictory providences by the promise, hoping the Lord in his own good time and way would

appear for my relief; the Lord, by these difficulties, was removing all other props, and sweeping off other refuges, except himself, and his faithful word; he was trying and exercising faith and patience, he knew he had greater trials yet to tryst me with; I have often remembred another text of Mr. Wilfon's, which he preached on about that time. Mic. iv. 10. "Be in pain, and labour to bring forth, O daughter of Zion, like a woman in travail: for now shalt thou go forth out of the city, and thou shalt dwell in the field, and thou shalt go even to Babylon, there shalt thou be delivered: there the Lord shall redeem thee from the hand of thine enemies." He was directed to speak very seasonably, both to the church's case, and my private one.

I was sometimes greatly tempted to call the promises delusions, but in these perplexities, the Lord was graciously pleased, sometimes, to outshoot Satan by his own bow; for I got then stronger grips and clearer views of the promises. I heard Mr. Ralph Erskine preach at Stirling, on Gen. xlix. 19. "Gad, a troop shall overcome him; but he shall overcome at the last." A suitable sermon to me, under this condition. He named many troops that rose up against believers, whereby they might be brought to a very low ebb, like the disciples going to Emmaus, and also mentioned many stronger troops on their side, which would make them more than conquerors at last. There was a scripture at that time often brought to my mind, Isa. xlv. 2. "I will go before thee and make the crooked places straight: I will break in pieces the gates of brass, and cut in sunder the bars of iron." One day I went to the sacrament at Abernethy, I had many struggles with Satan and unbelief; but got some relief from that word, I WILL, which had an impress of God's omnipotency and veracity. Mr. Wilfon preached upon Monday, Gen. xlv. 3. There are three times

times I WILL, mentioned in the text. "Fear not to go down into Egypt, for I WILL there make of thee a great nation. I WILL go down with thee into Egypt, and I WILL also surely bring thee up again." He observed, "That the promise is the best antidote against cross-like and discouraging providences." I there bought Mr. Ralph Erskine's sermon, intitled, "A promising God, a performing God." Which was very seasonable food for me then, and many times useful since. At another time hearing Mr. Ralph Erskine preach at Lintoun, when he spoke to various cases the Lord's people might be under; he said, "Perhaps some person was concluding their case to be a wonderful matchless one, which was the very sentiment of my heart; grant it so, but here is wonderful matchless help. There is none like the God of Jeshurun, who rideth upon the heavens for thy HELP." Deut. xxxiii. 26. This was a sweet and seasonable word to me then, and blessed be his holy name, his word continues unalterably the same; it is one of Moses's dying words to Israel, to encourage them against the many enemies and difficulties they had to encounter, and I would desire to leave it as my dying testimony, that in all perplexities and exigencies whatever, the shortest, surest and easiest method, yea, the only way, is by faith to trust in God, depend upon his promise, hang about his hand, and patiently wait, leaving all events to God. Good reason have I to say with the Psalmist Psal. cxix. 50.

*This word of thine my comfort is,
in mine affliction:
For in my straits I am reviv'd
by this thy word ALONE.*

It is a chief design I have in writing, to leave something on record of God's mercies, for the encouragement of others, especially my friends and relations.

YOU who are the surviving children of my eldest brother, what shall I say unto you, there was a word often recurred to me when teaching your deceased brother and sisters, Acts iii. 6. "Silver and gold have I none, but such as I have give I thee." Dear nephews, providence hath been very kind in nourishing you, and preserving both father and mother, when all my other brethren and sister's children were early left orphans; may you then consider your superior advantages, and superadded obligations: father and mother must forsake you shortly; it then becomes a question of the utmost concern and importance, who will be your tutor and manager. O that the happy solution of the question may be, with the Psalmist, "Then the Lord will take me up." Get God in Christ for your everlasting Father, and then tho' friends, wealth, health, yea, life itself forsake you, yet you have his faithful promise for it, redoubled, that "He will never, never leave nor forsake you." O then take him at his word now, for the shortness and uncertainty of life hath been evidently demonstrated in the early and sudden death of some of your brothers and sisters, as also two full grown sisters a while ago suddenly cut off by death, within six months of each other, a very alarming providence! besides your brother is now gone to eternity; certainly the language of these providences to us surviving friends, is, "Wherefore be ye also ready." There are only two branches of a considerable number remaining; perhaps impartial death may soon lop you off too. Seriously consider then, for what you are spared, surely not to "cumber the ground." I hope that soul-interesting question, "What shall I do to be saved?" hath cost you some serious meditation and

and hath issued in that only relief, "Believing in the
 "Lord Jesus Christ;" if so, all I shall say is, "Blessed
 "are ye whose God is the Lord." The marriage-relation is made up, and that indissolvably so; lay
 your account in meeting with trials and temptations
 of various kinds, from sin, Satan, and the world: but
 tho' it is thro' tribulation we must enter the kingdom,
 and in the world we are certainly to have it, yet there
 is a comforting word added, "in ME you shall have
 "PEACE:" and such a peace too "as passes all un-
 "derstanding." I would intreat you to be much in
 the exercise of prayer, which is just the breath of the
 heaven-born soul: "Pray without ceasing," is the di-
 vine direction.——If you have spent no time or
 thought upon the forementioned important question,
 then it is high time to awake out of sleep. "To be
 "without God in the world," as the scripture expres-
 ses it, is a melancholy thought, and to be without him
 thro' eternity is awful beyond comparison. Oh then,
 "To-day if ye will hear his gracious voice harden
 "not your hearts." God hath been giving you many
 solemn lectures on death and eternity, by the removal
 of brothers and sisters, and you have, for a considerable
 time enjoyed the means of grace and salvation, and ma-
 ny earnest and heart melting invitations in the word
 and gospel presently to close with Christ; and is it
 possible you have stood out so long? We read "of
 "God swearing in his wrath, that they of old should
 "not enter into his rest, because of unbelief" This
 is a most melancholy consideration, and should awaken
 your most serious attention, "lest when there is a
 "promise left you of entering into his rest, any of
 "you should come short of it by unbelief." He is
 yet graciously saying, O that he would say it with
 power (if not already) "Behold, I stand at the door,
 "and knock: if any man hear my voice, and open the
 "door, I will come in to him, and will sup with him,
 "and

“and he with me.” Rev. iii. 20. O therefore immediately put employment in his hand who has the key of the heart, “who opens and none can shut.” I hope you will not be offended, for I think I may venture to say, it is love to your precious and immortal souls, that urges me to speak, but alas, what can man say or do ! may God himself then speak into your hearts. I would only earnestly recommend to you, the constant practice of reading daily a portion of the holy scriptures, with prayer and ejaculations to God, that he would bless it to you, and give you the grand New Testament promise, even his own HOLY SPIRIT to open the scriptures and your understandings to know the scriptures; and hereby you will perceive new wonders every day. Long ago, when teaching your deceased brother and sisters, I learned by heart all the Psalm book, which has been of unspeakable use to me since. Satan and my deceitful heart then objected, that it would be a hard task, and an useless and unprofitable one; but I desire to record it for your encouragement, that both have been a great mistake, for many times, when under down casting and perplexing fears, the repeating of some of these, through God’s blessing, has strengthened faith, and encouraged hope, or when in solitude, has much helped to banish vain thoughts, and unprofitable meditations. O it is a noble armour ! Good reason have I to say with the Psalmist, Psal. cxix. 72. “The law of thy mouth is “better unto me, than thousands of gold and silver.” O then, read, believe, and meditate on the holy scriptures. Now I commend you and your seed to God and the word of his grace.

IN the winter of the year 1738, Mr. Wardrop lectured through the 14th, 15th, 16th, and 17th chapters of John. I had got these chapters formerly by heart, and many times had great pleasure in meditating on them; and now they had a fresh gust and relish; I also heard him lecture on several chapters in the beginning of the Acts of the apostles, concerning the erection of the New Testament church, which had a great influence upon me, to leave the established church, and join the secession, and convinced me of the righteousness of that cause in the main, though alas! there has been too much truth in what Mr. Wardrop observed, "That there is more of the high
" fails of a profession, than the balancing of humili-
" ty." And although he did not think it his duty to join in an open testimony, yet I have frequently heard him encourage others to turn their backs upon intruders, illustrating it by the comparison of Boaz commanding and intreating Ruth, to abide fast by his maidens, so he, as Christ's messenger, charged us to abide by Christ's honest, faithful servants, and he would direct them in their studies and discourses, to speak a word in season to our various cases. It was matter of great concern to give up with hearing Mr. Wardrop; for he was still helped to speak to my particular case, yet upon frequent deliberate consideration and prayer, reflecting that I had not only salvation-work, but also generation-work.
" And as it is observed, when any scripture-truth is
" opposed, or practice unobserved, or any point
" thereof let slip, or left neglected, lying open to the
" mercy of enemies; and as it highly becomes every
" loyal subject carefully and faithfully to obey the
" laws of his sovereign, and every valiant soldier the
" commands and instructions of his general, and that
" of an affectionate son the injunctions and testament
of

“ of his father. So how much more does it become
 “ every true-hearted Christian, according to the
 “ measure of light given him, carefully to observe and
 “ faithfully obey all the laws, ordinances, and institu-
 “ tions of Christ’s appointment in his word; for he
 “ who has all these characters united in him at once,
 “ presently views, and that not as an indifferent spec-
 “ tator, how each act in their respective stewardships
 “ committed to them in this lower vineyard, and
 “ will at last assuredly come, and call every one be-
 “ fore his impartial tribunal, and as the supreme
 “ Judge, pass a just and irreversibile sentence of abso-
 “ lution or condemnation.”

The substance of these considerations wanted not their weight with me, being convinced it was a duty to witness for God, when he calleth for it; and durst not say but that was his mind to me then. O that it had been with more true zeal, fixed deep in humility and self-denial, with a more single eye to the glory of God, and more of a Christ-like spirit! The last Sabbath I was at Whiteburn, Mr. Wardrop lectured upon the xiiiith chapter of the Acts, from the 36. verse, “ For David, after he had served his own generation by the will of God, fell on sleep.” He observed, “ That we have not only salvation-work, but gene-
 “ ration-work;” and exhorted each to be useful in their generations, which I was helped to apply for myself, as the Lord’s mind confirming me in my former thoughts, and by degrees and various means cleared up my present duty: but as the proverb is, “ many good nights is loath away.” It was very irksome to leave Whiteburn, where I had got many a sweet meal. About that time, I heard Mr. John Hunter preach at Forrestburn, with great satisfaction. He was a burning and a shining light for a season, but was suddenly carried off to shine more bright in the regions above. Now I have done with an account of
 Whiteburn

Whiteburn and Mr. Wardrop, but I desire to bless the Lord so long as I live, that ever I saw either of them, and desires to praise him for his wonderful love to me, and care of me all along, ever since I had a being, but more especially at some critical junctures and periods of my life. He hath always made my extremity his opportunity. I enjoyed there five years of the most pleasant hearing, and amongst the most agreeable and attentive hearers of the gospel. Many of them came from Lanerk, Linton, Biggar, Carnwath, and other places. O that my recording these passages may be blest for the encouragement of such as are in dark cases, "To look to the Lord for the single eye which is full of light, and who hath promised to lead the blind by a way they know not, and in paths they have not known. I will make darkness light before them, and crooked things straight, these things will I do unto them and not forsake them." Isa. xlii. 16.

In the year 1740, I went a second time from Easter-Glentore, the place of my birth, with my youngest brother, to the same house and farm we had before, in Slamanan, where we lived together for the space of six years, in constant friendship and sweet harmony.

I then enjoyed more health, outward freedom and liberty, peace and tranquillity, but alas! full of inward diseases, much plagued with carnality and deadness. I heard a minister observe, "That sometimes when the devil lets the believer alone with his temptations, Christ more remarkably withdraws the influences of his grace and Spirit." And Flavel relates, that he read of a people that were persecuted for reading the scriptures, and the more ardently did their hearts burn for them, but having got their liberty, their former zeal began quickly to languish and decay. My case then had too near a resemblance thereof, and I am afraid, perhaps it might be so with some others.

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We professed a warm zeal for gospel ordinances, and to be witnesses for the cause and testimony of Jesus, but alas! though our words were good, there were too many rotten-hearted professors among us. The Lord indeed wrought a very wonderful deliverance for us, when apparently under the feet and yoke of our spiritual oppressors, but how soon! Israel-like, "have we forgotten his mighty works unthankfully?" And though we all professed to disclaim pride and self, yet how much of it is prevailing! which hath provoked the Lord in his holy sovereignty "To divide us in his anger, and to hide his face in a great measure." But O that every one of us would blunt the edge of our complaint against ourselves, and praise him that the case is not worse, considering what we justly deserve: "It is of the Lord's mercies, we are not consumed." And it is because he is the unchangeable God, who divinely declares; "I am the Lord, I change not: therefore ye sons of Jacob are not consumed."

At that time I frequently went to Craigmalling and heard Mr. Clerkson, who was sometimes directed to speak very seasonably to me, particularly then, when under the forementioned case; at one time in speaking to various cases or exercises, he said, "Poor doubting and down cast Christian, what is thy case? Is it a desperate case, a dead and withered case? Well, whatever it be, put it into the great Advocate's hand, who never lost a plea that ever was committed to him." It was a very suitable word, for Satan and unbelief vigorously exerted themselves, to make me call all the promises delusions, but I was helped to resist them, by putting the case into the Advocate's hand, to be managed as he saw most for his glory and my good, and thereby wan to much composition of mind. Another time, when under the like dead case, I heard him lecture at Cambusnethen on the

37th chapter of Ezekiel, concerning the dry bones; and at the same time preached from Ezekiel xlvii. 9. "And every thing shall live, whither the river cometh." This was a strengthening and a refreshing word, which gave me ground of hope and relief, both for the church and myself. O the sweet repose that is to be found in all dead and perplexing cases whatever, by faith to cast ourselves into the arms of a living Jesus, "Who was dead, and is alive, and liveth for evermore."

God, by his providence, having conducted me a second time to Slamanan, where he had been remarkably kind to me at sacramental occasions, which bred in me a desire to do some service in that place, and now, "He who fulfilleth the desire of the longing soul," directed me, to call in some neighbouring children, to teach them to read, when guiding my brother's house; God only knows what was his design, but I enjoyed much pleasure and satisfaction therein. I continued there the space of six years, and then the Lord in his holy providence brought me to this place, in his own set time and way, as the accomplishment of many promises I had long before been made to take hold of, notwithstanding of a continued series of improbabilities which opposed the fulfillment of them.

But as this was a long and dark exercise, and having given some hints of it before*, I shall therefore, a little to illustrate this, with the foregoing and following passages, endeavour to give as true, plain and comprehensive an account thereof, as my weak capacity will allow, with a desire of acknowledging the divine hand of providence managing the whole matter, and for the encouragement of all young persons to give up their hearts to Christ, and put a blank in his hand, to dispose of them soul and body, lot and life, as he sees most for the glory of his great name; and if he is pleased to measure out to any of you, some peculiar

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exercises

* Page 35.

exercises, come immediately to God with it for grace to carry Christianly. Believe, hope, and patiently wait, always "judging God faithful that hath promised." ed.

I have already narrated, a few hints of a continued and singular exercise, which had its spring and rise in the year 1726 and continued till 1746. About the year 1724, I was seized with some distempers, which threatened to issue in a dangerous consumption, and concluded myself to be in a dying condition; however it pleased the Lord to revive me a little, and at the same time, gave me promises of my recovery, and of some work he was to put into my hand, in this corner of the world, where now I am, which were brought upon my mind then with such power, as I was enabled to believe these promises would be accomplished, or conclude that God was neither able nor faithful, which I durst not do; and being tempted sometimes to doubt, saying, "Doth his promise fail for evermore?" I was by degrees from time to time more confirmed of the truth and certainty thereof by God's word. Sometimes afterwards, when passing through this place of the country where now I am, Abraham's sojourning in the land of promise, where he had no habitation therein, was brought to my mind; and being tempted not only to distrust the promise, but also future temporal provision in this place; I was then rebuked with that word, Psal. cvi. 24. "Yea, they despised the pleasant land, they believed not his word." Thus I was exercised for the space of twelve years, while there was not the least appearance in providence of the accomplishment of God's promises; till in the year 1738, he who is now my Husband spoke to me, and at length matters were almost brought to a period, and every thing in providence seemed jointly to conspire, and speak forth the near approach of God's faithful promises being fulfilled; But as I had in former

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mer cases, applied to the Lord for light and direction, and was not disappointed, so now in this very important matter, though the favourable aspect of affairs seemed to dictate my present duty, yet judging providence not to be the rule of duty, I was helped to inquire at the Lord in his word and ordinances, and found it more and more cleared up therefrom, to be my present duty to wait. In the year 1740, he was married to another. Now when the Son of the promise was seemingly sacrificed, these promises, I say, of my coming to this place, which I was made as really believe, as those relating to an eternity, they being both settled upon the same foundation, so that if the one failed, so must the other; this I may truly say was a perplexing case, but the Lord graciously stepped in for my relief, when ready to question. "Hath the Lord forgotten to be gracious?" &c. And gave me renewed confirmations of faith in former promises, which gave me many errands to a throne of grace, that if the Lord had any service for me in this place, let him take his own time and way of bringing me to it, and though the Lord seemed "to slay me" in this respect, yet I was helped to trust in him, and resign all up to the divine disposal and management, and also got many comfortable scriptures*, first and last, suiting always the present exigency, both of confirmation, consolation and admonition. And the more that providence appeared to counteract the promise, and all arguments from carnal sense and reason

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* Num. xiv. 29. Ezek. vi. 9. Dan. xi. 35. Deut. xxxiii. 26. Judges xx. 18, --- 28. 1 Kings i. 17. 1 Chron. xix. 10. Psal. xxv. 9. Psal. xxvii. 14. Psal. xcvi. 2. Psal. cxlv. 19. Isa. xl. 11. Isa. xlii. 16. Isa. xlv. 2. Micah iv. 10. Micah vii. 9. Hab. ii. 3. Mal. iv. 2. Mat. xv. 25. Luke xvii. 32. John xi. 40. Acts i. 6, 7. Rom. iv. 18. 2 Pet. ii. 16.

quite overturned, then the more the Lord in this extremity stirred me up to believe, hope and wait, by holding out his faithful word of promise, and thereby gave me renewed confirmations of faith, and notwithstanding of all contradicting external dispensations, through God's grace, I reached much composure of mind, and submission to God's will for the time and manner of fulfilling his promises.

In the spring of the year 1745, the dissolution of said marriage took place; and at length, when the Lord's own appointed time to accomplish his promises drew nigh, he brought me to this place, the 3d of June 1746*, through a long train of peculiar, and trying circumstances, and for holy and wise ends known to himself. Having given a general account of this peculiar exercise, I shall say little more anent it, having wrote at a considerable length upon this subject elsewhere†.

I was, and perhaps may be reproached for being under the influence of a spirit of delusion in this matter, good reason have I indeed to submit to the charge, and accept of the challenge, as it comes from the hand of God, being often tempted to distrust his promises, and call them delusions, especially these relating to temporal mercies ‡; yet "Blessed be the Lord, that
"hath

* Exod. xii. 41. And it came to pass, at the end of the four hundred and thirty years, even the self-same day it came to pass, that all the hosts of the Lord went out from the land of Egypt.

† The author hath wrote the whole history and particular circumstances thereof, in a separate piece for her own satisfaction and use, which she did not incline to be published.

‡ Agreeable to the author's exercise and experience is among many others, the judgment of Dr. Owen, *Expos. on Heb.* Vol. 4th, page 51.

The

"hath given all that he promised ; there hath not
 "failed one word of all his good promise." 1 Kings
 viii. 56. But it is now upwards of thirty years since
 this exercise began ; I formerly did, and still look up-
 on it, rather as an evidence of the Lord's singular
 care of me, and the accomplishment of many promises
 he caused me take hold of in my youth, and that he in
 his holy sovereign wisdom, who can do nothing wrong,
 carved out this trial of faith, for his own glory, for
 holy and wise ends and purposes, best known to him-
 self, if I mistake not, by it he hath been doing several
 H 3 things

The belief of promises for temporal mercies is an emi-
 nent trial of faith ; too many deceive themselves with a
 presumption of faith in the promises of God for spiritual
 and eternal things ; but if they are brought into any trial
 as unto things temporal, they know not what belongs to
 the life of faith, nor how to trust to God in a due man-
 ner.

As also of Mr. Andrew Gray, Great and Precious Pro-
 mises, Ser. 1st. There are some promises extraordinary,
 others common, extraordinary promises are those that are
 given to some particular believers. Promises are either
 temporal or spiritual.-----We would have you to con-
 sider, that it is more easy for a Christian to believe spiri-
 tual promises than temporal ones ; for when a Christian is
 reduced into a strait, so that he can see no out-gate at pre-
 sent, sense and reason stands upon the top of his faith, and
 presseth him to despair.-----The temptations to misbe-
 lieve temporal promises, are more suitable and co-natural
 to a Christian, more consonant to flesh and blood, than
 temptations which assault him in resting upon the spiritual
 promises.----And besides, a Christian is often, so affright-
 ed by his daily failings, or perhaps gross out-breakings,
 that though he may through grace believe promises for his
 eternal salvation, yet he may be sadly distrustful of any
 particular promise for the present exigent ; knowing that
 though *The Lord pardons his peoples iniquities, yet he may
 take vengeance on their inventions.* There are many who
 think, that there is no use for faith, except for salvation
 and things above.

things at once; viz. Correcting for sin, exercising grace, conforming me, as he promised to my Lord and Master, and let me through many chambers of imagery and abominations in my heart, and above all, instructing me, who, alas! hath been a very dull scholar, something into the nature, use and absolute necessity, of that divine and excellent **LIFE OF FAITH.**

Now, young people, a chief design I had in relating the foregoing passage is for your encouragement, wholly to resign yourselves to God's wise conduct and management in all the periods of your life, and especially of marriage, that being one of the most critical and important changes of life, much depending upon it; beware of too suddenly plucking unripe fruit off the tree of common providence, for if so it will not fail to set your teeth on edge, O the great need of constant faith, both in temporal and eternal things! For in some periods of the Christian life, there is in God's providential conduct of matters, such a seeming opposition and inconsistency between his providences, commands and promises, as nothing but faith bowing the soul to the holy sovereignty of God can reconcile: and when faith is fixed upon the divine Omnipotency and veracity of God engaged in his word of promise, no distance of time, however long, or difficulties and inconsistencies, however great in the way of the accomplishment, can weaken or disturb its rest and calm.

NOW, dear friends, children of my eldest sister, before I conclude this remarkable period of my sinning life, let me speak a few words to you, who in the adorable providence of God, met so soon with alarming trials, in the early death of your mother, and a little after, the sudden death of your father, the consideration of the lame man from his mother womb,

in the 3d chapter of the Acts, was a mean, at that time, to make me submit to that awful dispensation of providence, as viewing a sovereign God, measuring out what crosses and trials, to whom, and when he pleases. We have reason to be examining what improvement we have been making of providences, means of grace, and other talents the Lord hath conferred on us, when fathers and mothers with many other near and dear relations are now gone off this stage into eternity. I was witness to see most part of you baptized with water, and was somewhat concerned, that ye might receive the inward grace, signified by the outward sign; I have often remembred part of a discourse Mr. Wardrop had at the baptism of some children; may the Lord bless it to you, or any of my poor weak endeavours; he said, "Two elements are concerned in baptism, the one with fire, the other with water;" and gave us some marks to know whether we had received the baptism of fire. "It is a natural property of water to gravitate and run downward, if we had got no other baptism, our hearts would be carnal and earthly. But it is some of the natural properties of fire to fly upward, produce heat, and emit light; so if the Holy Ghost hath baptized you with fire, the bent of your affections will be set on things above, your hearts warmed with ardent love to Christ, in some measure enlightened in the knowledge of Christ yourselves, and your earnest desire and endeavour that all around you should be enlightned, and share of the same spiritual privileges." What I would be at is, to advise you reverently to acknowledge God for your life and all other enjoyments, and wholly surrender yourselves and families to be managed any way he sees most for his glory and your good: be anxious for nothing to yourselves and families but union to Christ and communion with him; for he says, "Be careful in no thing

“ thing, but in every thing by prayer and supplication, on, make your requests known unto God.” And casting all your care upon him, believing he careth for you. There is a scripture in Isa. ix. 6. “ For unto us a Child is born, unto us a Son is given, and the government shall be upon his shoulder: and his name shall be called, **WONDERFUL, COUNSELLOR, THE MIGHTY GOD, THE EVERLASTING FATHER, THE PRINCE OF PEACE.**” This was a sweet scripture to me in my youth, and is the same yet; many things that hath promised me satisfaction, hath frustrated my expectation, but the word of divine promise hath not, nor shall fail, although the sweet relish thereof may sometimes be almost gone. O meditate much, and pray for faith’s view and esteem of this **CHILD** born unto us, who is the Ancient of days. Wonder much at the love of God, in giving his only begotten **SON** to and for such vile sinners as we are. O beware of murmuring at any of God’s dispensations of providence, however dark and cross they may appear to your carnal reason: the government is upon his shoulder, who can do nothing wrong; he is a **WONDERFUL** Person, wonderful in all his names, natures, offices and sweet relations, yea, an unfathomable mystery of wonders, which an eternity will not unfold. **COUNSELLOR**, O be much about his hand seeking counsel from him, and in all your ways acknowledging him, and he shall direct your steps. **THE MIGHTY GOD**, to save to the uttermost, able to plead your cause, and deliver you out of the hand of all your enemies. **THE EVERLASTING FATHER**, in whom the fatherless findeth mercy. **THE PRINCE OF PEACE**, who has cheerfully laid down his life, and shed his precious blood to procure peace. I know not what to say to you, for human words are vain, but O be much in the practice of reading the holy scriptures, and there hear what God says to you.

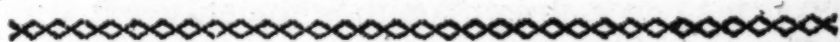
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David studied upon the word in the morning of his days, and this made him even wiser than his teachers. May the Lord teach you his divine word by his divine Spirit, and enrich you and your seed with that great promise, Deut. xxx. 6. "And the Lord thy God will circumcise thine heart, and the heart of thy seed, to love the Lord thy God with all thine heart, and with all thy soul, that thou mayst live."



THIRD PERIOD.

[Containing the space of 16 years.]

HAVING been more large on the former part than I expected, I shall only give a general account of the care providence hath had about me, since I was married, and besides, my memory is not able to retain as formerly, yet it is great ground of thankfulness that it is not worse, and lamentation that it hath not been more employed to better purposes. I think it hath been, and is my earnest desire, that young ones would "remember their Creator in the days of their youth." O youth, youth, is the only season, which I have found by experience Satan and unbelief made use of many arguments to divert me from religion, and dissuade me from taking up so much time in learning questions, psalms and chapters; and particularly that one, "I need not put myself to this vain trouble, for I would soon forget them all." But I find the contrary to my sweet experience, and records it for your encouragement to gather fast in the spring and summer of youth, and prepare for the winter of old age, death and

and eternity. Mr. Dyer says, "Youth is a flower of Christ's setting, and shall it be of the devil's plucking?" If youth be sick of it, will not old age be sick of it? Oh! it is dangerous to get a wrong set in youth, for the dye that any thing receives at first, generally retains a tincture of it: "I love them that love me, and those that seek me early shall find me." This is a gracious and alluring word, O that your hearts were melted with it!

A little before I came to this place, the Lord was threatening to destroy us with a Popish enemy, and that in the midst of our own bowels, and thereby to deprive, if not of our lives, yet of our freedom, and spiritual privileges, we were greatly cast down, and many sorrowing as if all hope was gone, and when the deliverance came, too much of the glory was given to instruments, and not to him to whom it is due: how have we forgot his mighty works unthankfully, and thereby hath provoked the Lord to leave us in a great measure? And no less did the anger of the Lord afterwards appear against the sins of men, in the spiritual judgments that took place; division in the church being none of the least of them; its felt effects remain unto this day, and hath carried along with it a numerous train of dismal consequences. O how much of pride and self has been at bottom on every hand, and so great a mixture of our own spirits, in the cause of Christ, which is as a dead fly in the ointment, and greatly detracts the favour and relish of the precious truths of Jesus, both from ourselves and others. What biting and devouring of one another? It is of the Lord's mercies we have not been consumed one of another. What hath our debates produced, at least the manner of managing them, but strife and contentions, alienation of heart and affections, stumbling to the weak, and hardening to the generation? And alas! hath eat out much of the life and power of religion,
and

and is a reproach to the peaceful name of our great Master, whose true zeal for his house did eat him up, and yet took occasion to reprove the fiery zeal of his disciples, saying, "Ye know not what manner of spirits ye are of." So that the new commandment and distinguishing badge of Christ's disciples, "Love to one another," is worn much out of sight, and Christ's last legacy of peace little observed. O that we could justify him, and blunt the edge of our complaint against ourselves, and wonder that we have not been made signal examples, as Korah and his company. But the Lord hath a sovereign hand; he hath not been destroying his church, but casting her into the fire, and much dross hath been discovered; and likewise heresies and divisions must come, "that they which are approved, may be made manifest," 1 Cor. xi. 19. And he hath been trying who are his valiant ones for TRUTH on the earth, who are his faithful friends and followers, who says, "Ye are my friends if ye do whatsoever I command you," John xv. 14. for whenever faith discovers a truth or command to be divine, though however indifferent, and of little importance it may appear in the eyes of the world, yet when duly exercised, will shew a tender regard to it, because it is Christ's, and will hold it fast, and strenuously vindicate the same when called in question, and persevere in spite of all hazards. Oh the want of faith is the ruin of all! and is the cause of that wavering of mind in principles, and looseness in practice that so wonderfully prevails amongst us. But notwithstanding of these evils in principle and practice, it is great matter of encouragement, and support for the faith of God's Israel, that there is an advocate appearing in the higher house on their behalf, who pours out this prayer that will be answered, John xvii. 17. "Sanctify them through thy truth, thy word is truth." "Seeing then we have a great High Priest, that is passed

“ fed into the heavens, Jesus the Son of God, let us
 “ hold fast our profession.” And amidst these divi-
 sions and animosities, that take place amongst us,
 which makes us so unlike the disciples of a meek and
 humble Jesus; it is no less comforting, that we have
 the same High Priest in the same prayer, John xvii.
 expressing his earnest desire for our unity, and inter-
 ceeding in the most affectionate, endearing, and heart-
 melting manner, verses 21, 22, 23. “ That they all
 “ may be One, as thou Father art in me, and I in thee,
 “ that they also may be One in us: that the world
 “ may believe that thou hast sent me. And the glo-
 “ ry which thou gavest me, I have given them: that
 “ they may be One, even as we are One. I in them
 “ and thou in me, that they may be made perfect in
 “ One, and that the world may know that thou hast
 “ sent me, and hast loved them, as thou hast loved
 “ me.” O let us therefore, both stedfastly and faith-
 fully, “ hold fast our profession.” And at the same
 time, “ Let us as the elect of God, holy and beloved,
 “ put on bowels of mercies, kindness, humbleness of
 “ mind, meekness, long-suffering, forbearing one a-
 “ nother, and forgiving one another. And above all
 “ these things put on CHARITY, which is the bond
 “ of perfectness.” Col. iii. 12, 13, 14. I have made
 a long digression, but it has been matter of consider-
 able thought, and I have reason to lament my great
 short-coming in true Christian zeal, and also the want
 of a hearty love and affection to all, especially “ of
 “ the household of faith.”

But now to return, some time after I came to this
 place, I was under great perplexity and down-castings,
 and what increased the pain, though formerly I met
 with trials, and had some difficulty to win to public
 ordinances, yet the Lord directed his servants to speak
 seasonably to my case, and made me come home re-
 joicing; but at that time, “ deep was calling unto
 deep,”

" deep," for though I was meeting with trials, yet I could get no relief, the Lord indeed, brought me to this place as the accomplishment of many promises, and over many mountains of improbabilities; yet when meeting with new trials, what advantage did Satan and unbelief get through my unthankfulness and unwatchfulness, to tempt me to be discouraged and mistrust a promising God, who had given many displays of his faithfulness to me formerly? The Lord hath often helped me to plead with himself, to bring me off all lying refuges, and place my confidence in him alone, and various methods hath he taken first and last, to have it so, especially at that time. He, in his adorable providence, shut all other doors upon me, that I might say with the Psalmist, " I looked upon my " right-hand, and on my left, and there was " none that took care for my soul." But well may I say, " The Lord is my shepherd, I have " not nor shall want." " He can give songs in the " night," and hath places of shelter for his flock in winter storms, and of sweet repose in the scorching noon. The Lord has not promised to keep out of trouble, but blessed be his name; he hath promised to be with his people in it, and that is enough, Isa. xliii. 2. " When thou passest through the waters, I will " be with thee, &c." " In the mount of the Lord " it shall be seen; the Lord will provide." And was as good as his word, in providing *Boston's Crook in the Lot*, which was very seasonable, when I was like to be altogether run down by unbelief, and its other constant evil attendants. The Lord's mind to me therein, was, to look upon all the crooks and trials I was meeting with, as coming from his own fatherly hand, for holy and wise ends, as conviction of sin, and correction for it, Psal. xcix. 8. Preventing of sin, Hos. ii. 6. Humiliation, and discovery of latent corruption, Deut. viii. 2. And the exercise of grace, 1 Pet. i. 6.

i. 6. He says, when meeting with crosses and trials, we should inquire why the Lord contends with us; for men may be angry with us, and accuse us for one thing, but God for another; witness Shimei cursing David, David overlooked Shimei, and looked to God in the matter of his cursing, as one would the ax, fixing the eye upon him that wielded it; he exhorts much to seek grace to be rightly exercised, and to help down our proud spirits; and to be more earnest to get good of the crook, than to have it removed; and to learn that divine art of extracting the sweet out of the bitterness of the lot, considering by this means, the Lord cuts off the by-channels, that the whole stream of the soul's love may run towards himself, pulling off the man's burden and clog of earthly comforts, that he may run the more easily the Christian race; and besides, he sweetly and truly observes, There is never a crook God makes in our lot, but it is in effect heaven's offer of a blest exchange, in managing of which God first puts out his hand, and takes away some earthly thing from us, and instead thereof, it is expected we put out our hand next, and take some heavenly thing from him, particularly his CHRIST. O blessed exchange indeed! infinite fulness for creature-emptiness! I may record it for the honour of God, and my own shame, that I was fainting very much at that time; but *Boston's Crook in the Lord's hand*, was a mean of reviving my languishing soul. The Lord had taken me formerly to the school of affliction, and was now bringing me to the school of cross providences; he knew I had much need of this discipline to tame my unruly dispositions, and receive some necessary and important lessons: he saw I was disposed to nestle in some earthly comforts, and so set fire to my nest, he put some ingredients into my cup I was very unwilling to take, but the wise Physician knew infinitely better than I did, how much physic my diseases needed.

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And I have found from experience, that what I was most averse to take, hath been most blest for my soul's health, and when concluding with Jacob all these things are against me, yet they in the event have appeared to be most wisely for me; He does not afflict "willingly." For he sees a need be of heaviness, "through manifold temptations." The Lord indeed was graciously pleased to warn me of trials, for I was awakened one morning, a considerable time before this, with that word, "I have a baptism to be baptized with, and how am I straitened, till it be accomplished?" Luke xii. 50. and could scarcely sleep quietly afterwards. But when the time of trial came, how did I shrink, yea, rather fret and murmur, so that he made me see my absolute weakness and insufficiency for work or warfare, and the necessity of a constant and an intire dependence upon him alone. Sometimes, when tempted to fret or faint under crosses, that word was brought to my mind, "The cup which my Father giveth me, shall I not drink it?" And indeed, the due consideration and faith's view of the exquisite sufferings of Christ, what sort of a cup he drank, when standing in the law-room and stead of sinners, and how meekly and cheerfully he went thro' with his work; till he said on the cross, "It is finished:" the solid belief of this, would make us ashamed of the many frettings and faintings under our petty crosses; this appears to be a weighty argument the apostle proposes to the consideration of the Hebrews. "For consider him that endured such contradiction of sinners against himself, lest ye be wearied and faint in your minds."

Before this time, I enjoyed much pleasure and satisfaction in attending public ordinances, and was sometimes afraid of being like a tree full of leaves and flourishes, but little fruit or root; but at this time, I was more shut up to private duties, and desires, to

praise the Lord for providing such seasonable food, and "taking the yoke off my jaws" in any measure, to feed upon it. I got another book, which hath been many times useful, both then and since, I mean *Hutcheson on the twelve lesser prophets*. The 7th chapter of Micah had before afforded me several very instructing and comforting passages, especially ver. 9. "I will bear the indignation of the Lord, because I have sinned against him, until he plead my cause, and execute judgment for me. He will bring me forth to the light, and I shall behold his righteousness." I was desirous to hear Hutcheson's mind of this verse, and being well satisfied therewith, which was a mean of setting me to a more narrow searching of mine own heart, and the wise design and procedure of providence, as also to a diligent perusal of that brief, but practical and edifying exposition, where, of the many perplexing cases, the Lord in his adorable providence has seen fit to exercise me with, both relating to the church and myself, few ever occurred; but I got a suitable word for it in that book. I had sometimes formerly thought, that there was some awful stroke abiding these lands, and when I read this book, I was more and more convinced of the truth and certainty thereof, so that, "I had sometimes fainted, unless I had believed to see the goodness of the Lord in the land of the living:" especially considering that our diseases are so similar to those of Israel and Judah; so that if the Lord keep his ordinary way, it is to be feared, he will come with some nameless judgments to awaken and punish such an extreme secure, carnal and profane people as we are; if I rightly remember, Boston observes, "That the Lord sees meet, for holy and wise ends, best known to himself, to exercise his dearest saints, with very strange crooks in their lot, but likely there is a public crook abiding the generation, that will make

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"us think all our private little crooks nothing in comparison of this." Hath there not many wasting spiritual judgments taken place already? and an additional weight thereto, is a dreadful security and insensibility under them; what are all the errors and delusions, defections and divisions, but judgments which our sins have procured, Hos. ix. 7. "The days of visitation are come, the days of recompence are come, Israel shall know it; the prophet is a fool, the spiritual man is mad, for the multitude of thine iniquity and the great hatred." So that it appears from the word what sinful hand people may have in provoking the Lord to permit both kings and ministers to act like mad-men, it is said, "The Lord was angry with Israel, and moved David to number the people," O that we were as much united in crying to the Lord, for a spirit of grace and supplication, mourning and turning upon all ranks, as we have been in provoking the Lord by our joint and numberless ways of sinning; it hath been sometimes a mean to compose me when tempted to be discouraged under trials, to consider how great a sinner I had been and yet continued to be, and such a sinful church and land I was in, which set me a praising a long-suffering God, who was bearing so patiently with such astonishing sinners, and yet not destroying us with a French and Spanish enemy, which many have thought will be the scourge of these covenant-breaking lands.

I likewise got a book of Mr. Bell's, intitled, *Grapes in the wilderness*, which was very useful to me in wilderness-trials, his subject of discourse is on Hos. ii. 14. "Therefore, behold, I will allure her, and bring her into the wilderness, and speak comfortably unto her." He mentions several reasons why the Lord brings his church and people into the wilderness, one reason is, to punish or correct them for their sins, and prevent them from sinning more, as a Father who hath

a family of children, some of whom are seized with a consumption, he carefully separates them from one another, in order to prevent the growing infection; another reason is, to enhance the value of mercies, for persons in adversity will esteem and be more thankful for one mercy, than many in prosperity, and will then cry out, "It is of the Lord's mercies we are not consumed." He shews the analogy between Christ and a suiter, and compares ministers to procurators, sent by Christ to bring back his harlot church to him again, but all they can say will not do, till he come himself.—He says, it is common for suiters to give gifts to those they are in suit of, and if they refuse to accept of themselves, they return the gifts back again, which if they do not, it is esteemed among men base and unjust, how much more impious and sacrilegious is it, to withhold from God his gifts? For all we have is his own, and it is his will, that we should give up ourselves, and all we have, to him again, with our own consent, and let him manage us for his own glory, and our good. What though he take us from a fat land, and bring us into a wilderness, we should not quarrel with him, since he hath said, "There will I speak COMFORTABLY." It would be both tedious to relate, neither can I now remember every thing that was useful to me in that book, but it was a cordial from the Lord's hand to strengthen my sinking spirit when like to faint. In my youth, when reading Rutherford's letters, I got some words that have been of great use, he says, "If he behoved to have a cross, let him have a seamless Christ-like cross." To which I said, Amen, and I cannot say, but he hath heard me in that, but O how much reason to be ashamed of my unchristian carriage under crosses, which hath given me many errands to a throne of grace, for a Christ-like spirit under the various dispensations of providence; and cannot say but he hath wonderfully

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condescended; I remember another word in the letters; he says, "Let the Lord make me a bridge over a water, a stepping-stone in a gutter, or any thing whereby he may be glorified." To which I also said, Amen; and the Lord hath made sometimes trials of it, and thereby hath discovered much of the pride and enmity of the heart, many a stroke must be given at the root of the tree of pride and self, before they fall, and yet ay ready to bud again. I desire to bless the Lord for the schools he hath brought me to, and the lessons he hath instructed me in: I have been a very dull scholar, but he is a divine Teacher, and therefore infinitely wise, tender and patient, condescending to go over the same lesson again and again. O Young ones, come to this great Teacher, who teacheth as never man did, and likewise gives a capacity to receive instruction: you have his absolute promise for it, "They shall all be taught of God." Hold him at his word, and wait about his hand.

One time when at the sacrament in Balfrone, I was in a perplexed condition, having it for my exercise, that I was a poor friendless creature, because I had some affairs to manage far beyond my skill, and had none that I could communicate my mind to: Mr. William Moncrief in Alloa preached first from John xiv. 28. — "If ye loved me, ye would rejoice, because I said, I go unto the Father." — He spoke to several cases, and amongst others, he observed, "Art thou a poor friendless creature, that hath none to plead thy cause, Christ hath gone to the Father, put thy case in his hand." I was helped to take comfort and encouragement from that word, and to wait about his hand for light and direction: this was a dark exercise for the space of twelve years, being in a strait to know, how to manage in it, so as God might be glorified: many errands it caused me have on that account to a throne of grace, and I hope not

not in vain ; I was desirous to know, what was duty in the sight of God, and that he would keep me on every hand, from fearing the frowns, or valuing the smiles of men, and at length he heard me, and directed me to steer such a course, as was the occasion of my learning to write, which hath been a pleasant exercise to me for some time ; in my dark and sighing days, I got that word of promise,—" And she shall sing " there, as in the days of her youth."—Hos. ii. 15. And now I have felt the accomplishment of it, in writing with my hands, and looking with pleasure upon the many remarkable providences, and tokens of divine favour I met with formerly. I many times thought with Job, " Oh that God's wonderful ways " of dealing with me were written ! Oh that they " were written in a book ; that they were graven " with an iron pen, and lead in the rock for ever." But I never thought, that I would write them with mine own hand ; it hath revived my spirits, so that my frail and decaying body is the better of it, I hope God shall get glory, and some soul's edification, and that is all I want.

Some time (after several providences intervening) I was under much despondency, for though we were making a profession of appearing for the cause and testimony of Jesus, and though I had no back-look to others, yet my heart was like to sink, considering our unsingleness in designs, prosecutions, and ends, and not so humble as became us, neither for our own sins nor that of others. I was afraid we would provoke the Lord to leave us altogether ; about that time I heard Mr. John Heugh in Stirling, upon a fast-day preach on these words,—“ Shall not my soul be avenged on “ such a nation as this ? ” Jer. v. 9. I thought we had the very marks and characters, he gave of a people, on whom the Lord would be avenged ; and my heart was like to shrink under the awful apprehensions

of

of deserved judgments. I went the following Sabbath to Larber, in a very disconsolate case, both about the church and myself; Mr. Hough lectured in Zech. i. 12. and downwards, "Then the angel of the Lord answered and said, O Lord of hosts, how long wilt thou not have mercy on Jerusalem, and on the cities of Judah, against which thou hast had indignation these threescore and ten years," &c. I was much revived before he had finished the first verse. He spoke to the following purpose, "That the church and people of God in their distresses and afflictions, have a room in Christ's heart, in his intercession to the Father, for he is constantly observing all their low cases, and carefully keeping count of the days of their adversity, and is praying for mercy to them; yea, already hath obtained a good and comfortable answer on their behalf, and however sad and disconsolate you may be about the low case of Zion, or your own particular case; "Yet in patience possess your souls, and lift up your heads, for the day of your redemption draweth nigh:" and though you may think you do not get your prayers answered, yet Christ, who takes the most desperate like causes in hand, hath obtained his requests, he spoke much of Christ's love and affection to his church and people, and that it is not every fault and miscarriage that will dissolve the marriage relation, and his jealousy over her is so great, that his heart bleeds, as it were, for the injuries done her, and in due time will sufficiently resent them, and plead her cause against all her enemies; he observed, that the Lord in his adorable providence had ordered a line to be stretched out over these lands of Scotland, England and Ireland, and although there was much rubbish remaining to be removed, yet the Lord would build his church in these lands." This was a very pleasant day, and the thoughts of it hath been many times

times supporting to me since, and looks upon the liberty I enjoy, of reading this with much more, as the accomplishment of some promises I was helped that day to believe; I sometimes heard him at the Tannuch with great satisfaction: I think it hath been the Lord's mind to me, that I should encourage the spreading of the gospel, for I have often got most of the Lord's mind and countenance in those places, where others thought I should not have gone. He hath likewise been made an instrument to direct and comfort me, when like to faint and give over attending public ordinances altogether, namely, upon a fast day at Loanhead, he preached from Hos. ii. 8. "How shall I give thee up, Ephraim? How shall I deliver thee, Israel? How shall I make thee as Admah? How shall I set thee as Zeboim? Mine heart is turned within me, my repentings are kindled together," I was at that time very much grieved to think on the great ingratitude and bad returns all were giving to the Lord, especially professed witnesses, for his wonderful kind dealings towards us, in giving such a reviving in our bondage: I was afraid we would provoke the Lord to leave us altogether: I was like to faint, for wo will be unto us, if he depart. But the Lord sent his servant to speak to the case, as though I had told him: he said, "Perhaps some person is like to give over attending on public ordinances, because of the many hainous provocations, the Lord hath got to forsake them." He answered, "Thou must not give it over, but wait about his hand, the Lord will not leave his church; he will yet do great things for his name's sake, his Christ and promise sake." I was a little revived that day, and hath ever since been attending so far as my strength and situation would permit, and desires to adore his patience, and bless his name for any evidences of his gracious presence either to ministers or people.

About

About six years ago, I had some near friends suddenly removed by death, which was the occasion of much thought to me, being often grieved, that we were not more glorifying to God and edifying to one another while in life, and that I could do so little by my talk and walk to stir up and encourage them; what a noble pattern is our Lord, who went always about doing good, excellent example! But ah! distant and slow followers. At that time I was seized with much weakness of body, especially of my breast, whereby I was rendered very unable to speak, but still impressed with great desires to speak something that might be glorifying to God and useful to relations when I am gone to eternity. I had many thoughts about them, and never essayed to pray, but they were a great weight upon my spirit, requesting especially for spiritual mercies, many of them being very well provided in temporal enjoyments; while I was thus exercised, time seemed very precious, and the faculty of speech valuable, and was greatly afraid of wasting either of them in vanity, the candle of my life being apparently near an end, and more and more the Lord increased my former desires of spending the few remains of my dying life in imitation of Jacob.

About that time I got a book of Mr. Willison's, intitled *The afflicted man's companion*, formerly mentioned; he says much to old and dying Christians, to spend their last strength in commending Christ and religion to a young generation, and to commit to writing, if they can, something that may be useful to surviving friends, when they are gone, which had a great impression on my mind, and made me earnestly long, oh! that I could write. The inward weakness of my body still continuing, and likewise a great desire of being some way useful to my friends and acquaintances; I resolved to take a turn through the Monkland, many of my friends and acquaintances residing

siding there, thinking, perhaps it would be the last farewell. Accordingly I went, and hearing of Hamilton's sacrament, I took that opportunity, amidst many difficulties, and had the pleasure of speaking with some of my friends who died in a little after; Satan and unbelief through the rainy weather, and weakness of my body, greatly harassed and urged me to return home, yet I was helped to set forward, and was well carried through, having it still for my exercise, how to be some way useful to my friends, and was much encouraged and confirmed from the sermons I heard at Hamilton, that it is not only an incumbent duty to be careful about the case of our own souls, but also that of others, and particularly Mr. John Jamieson in Glasgow, proved it by a variety of scriptural arguments. He said, "Parents and masters that are not careful for the souls of their children and servants, practically said with Cain, Am I my brother's keeper?" He answered one objection I was sadly harassed and discouraged with, namely, "You may perhaps be ready to apprehend, that your instructions will be altogether vain and fruitless, and no regard or attention paid to your weak, though well meant advices." He said, "Notwithstanding of all this, the duty remain'd unalterably the same, and besides, it is cutting too far before the point; for though you have no prospect of encouragement at present, yet you know not but they may remember them afterwards, and through God's blessing, be of singular use, when you are gone to eternity, if not, your warnings will be a witness against them," 1 Thess. v. 19. And for an example and pattern, mentioned the woman of Samaria, "who, when she had got a meeting with Christ herself, called all to come, she did not bid them go their alone, but come and I will go with you, which imports that believers should do their utmost, to encourage others to
" come

"come to Christ." This with other discourses of Mr. Goodlet and Mr. Allice, preached on the same occasion, very much excited and encouraged me, but would be too tedious to relate. O my dear friends, it hath been no small grief to me, when I reflect on so many early and sudden deaths of a number of our relations, and yet these speaking providences are so little observed by us; surely their language is, "Wherefore be ye also ready, for at such an hour as ye think not, the Son of man cometh. You and I will desire Christ to be our friend at death and judgment. O then, what fools are we, to hurry ourselves so with the world, and the vanities thereof, and bestow so little time to get acquaintance with Christ our best Friend, who says, "Acquaint now thyself with God, and be at peace with him, and thereby good shall come unto thee." And this puts me in mind to speak a word to you the surviving children of my deceased brother GEORGE.

Dear Nephews,

SOME of you may remember, or at least be informed, that by reason of the early death of your father and mother, you were left orphans. It was matter of much exercise to me then, praying for you, that the Lord himself would be your Tutor and Manager, and I do not want to cast off all concern about you yet; O my dear friends, study to dig deep into the corruption and depravity of nature: be much in prayer for the Holy Spirit, to lead you to this discovery, and then you will readily attest to that true description of your heart, "The heart of man is deceitful above all things and desperately wicked," and that we are all as an unclean thing, and all our righteousnesses as filthy rags." I have found by experience,

rience, that it is not an easy matter to bring proud nature to a belief and acknowledgment of this, but an Almighty power will do it, and this only; I intreat you earnestly to consider the nature and guilt of unbelief; this, with original sin, does not trouble a natural conscience much, and therefore these hidden enemies are the most dangerous of all; faith and unbelief are two opposites, and both are quite out of the view of a carnal and unrenewed mind, and yet of the utmost importance to know, the one leading to eternal life, the other to everlasting condemnation. "He that believeth on the Son, hath everlasting life, and he that believeth not the Son, shall not see life; but the wrath of God abideth on him," John iii. 36. O then, employ the Holy Spirit, whose office it is to convince of sin, especially of unbelief, John xvi. 9. Take him at his word, and say, "Do as thou hast said." Be much in the study of the mystery of FAITH; be well acquainted with your Bibles, and the promises therein, and study and meditate on them, and particularly those that suit your present case. Faith is not only absolutely necessary in justification, but also is of unthought-of use to promote sanctification, for it is a self-emptying grace, that is a wonderful paradox, but a true one, "When I am weak, then am I strong," 2 Cor. xii. 10. O learn that sweet art of converting all duties into a promise, and this will make the most difficult duties pleasant and easy, and when you are like to be foiled with your spiritual enemies, bring all to the Omnipotent arm and strength of Christ; dissolve all into a sweet promise, "Sin shall not have dominion over you." "The government is upon his shoulders." And blessed be his name that it is so, for he knows, that we have neither wisdom, strength nor will to govern. O then, just now, put all the enemies of your salvation in his hand, "who must reign till he put all enemies under his feet."

"feet." O that woful unbelief is ay for putting him off the throne ! My dear friends, do not give way to unbelieving despondency in any perplexing cases whatever ; for this is a pouring contempt on the person and all the offices of Christ. It is often the case, and I have found it so by experience, that when God intends some special blessing, or child of promise, he commonly puts a sentence of death, as it were, upon it, and on all the ways that lead to it, here is the trial of faith, and unbelief is ready with its cry, "Is his mercies clean gone ?" The wisdom of carnal sense and reason lies in poring upon difficulties, and seeming impossibilities which lie in the way of the promises ; but faith's wisdom consists in passing them all by, overlooking them, by fixing its eye alone upon the power and faithfulness of God, engaged in his word of promise, and so notwithstanding of deadness and darkness within, and seeming contradicting dispensations without, faith staggers not, but judges God faithful that hath promised, who also will perform.

O the vast treasures contained in that promise ! "I WILL BE YOUR GOD," which includes a supplying all possible wants, spiritual or temporal ; "AND YE SHALL BE MY PEOPLE," includes the free giving us all these qualifications requisite for that estate and relation. O what can be more than himself ! and what will he not give, when he gives himself ! ("He that spared not his own Son," &c. Now my dear friends, to conclude, all may be summed up in this, get CHRIST and you have ALL ; and as you are, in the providence of God, all married, O get Christ to be your Husband, and the new covenant for your contract, and this is a marriage relation, that will never, never be dissolved, and a bond that will never, never be broken. May God, "make you and your seed worthy of his calling, and fulfil all the good

“ pleasure of his goodness in you, and the work of
“ faith with power.”

ALTHOUGH the Lord planted some earnest desires in me to be some way useful, yet unbelief discouraged me much, but O how hath he pitied me, far beyond my own expectation, in granting me such a liberty to record something of his loving-kindness in my old age, which hath been no small comfort to me, and I would fain desire and hope, for the encouragement of some others. What reason have I to be humbled before God, and never open my mouth in commending myself, but to praise him, in conducting me by his infinite wisdom, even from the womb till now, and to be astonished at his wonderful love, patience and faithfulness, that though I have had many halts, and given many back-looks to other lovers, yet he hath never parted with me, but hath had as particular a care of me in all the changes of life, as really as he had of Israel of old, in bringing them out of Egypt, through the Red-sea and wilderness.

O my friends, for your soul's sake, for Christ's sake obey his loving command, “ Search the scriptures, “ for in them ye think ye have eternal life, and they “ are they which testify of me.” John v. 39. Make much use of your Bibles, and examine all principles and practices by the rule of the word. “ To the law “ and to the testimony; if they speak not according “ to this word, it is because there is no light in them,” Isa viii. 20. O pray much for a divine faith of the scriptures; for it is only this faith that is pleasing to God, or of real advantage to our souls; be much concerned to improve this golden hour of grace, death is fast approaching; there is no grace to be obtained after death, what is left undone in that awful moment
must

must continue so for ever ; at the voice of the summons we must go, pardoned or not, holy or unholy ; opportunity, saith a writer, is a golden mattock, to dig for heavenly treasure ; oh ! do not wear it out as many have done, in digging pebbles, and at the end become a fool. Read the xxiid chapter of Job 21. verse, and downwards, which directs how to be truly rich and honourable, it hath many times been a pleasant passage of scripture to me, and much of the accomplishment thereof have I seen, do not let the world get a grip of your hearts ; for it is a troublesome, unsatisfactory and short-lived portion ; when you find the world ready to gain too much room in your heart, the following scriptures, I hope, you will seriously peruse, O that God would bless them to you ! Mat. v. 26. Mat. xvi. 26. Luke x. 42. James iv. 4. Rev. iii. 18.

O young ones ! give up your hearts to Christ : you like a merry life well, but you will never know what life is, till you get Christ. Satan and corruption will endeavour to persuade you, that a religious life is a melancholy one, but this is a very delusive mistake ; for one moment's enjoyment of Christ, is infinitely more satisfactory than an eternity of all the world's pleasures, riches and honours. Some of you are much taken up with marriages and weddings, O that you were striving to out-run one another, who to be first married to Christ, and get him to be your friend. He once honoured a marriage in Cana of Galilee with his presence, but if you desire his countenance then, or at any other change of life, you must do what he bids you. What a mournful thing is it, that so much precious youth, health, time and liberty, should run out to waste on vanity and folly, and so much attendance unnecessarily on fairs, weddings, visits, and many other ways of spending the candle of life, that will be so soon extinguished. We in this generation have

grieved, quenched and resisted the Holy Spirit, so that he hath in a great measure departed from our hearts and families and his ordinances in the land, and he hath given up a great part of us to walk after the imaginations of our own corrupt hearts, which is a most awful judgment in itself, and a sad presage of much more to follow. O that we were as much united in wrestling, Jacob-like, for a returning God and glory, as we have been and are, in revolting from God, and in following the vain and sinful customs and follies of the age. O that this poor unthinking generation, would take leisure to consider, what Christ hath done to procure their freedom, 1 Pet. i. 18, 19. and what innumerable obligations they are under to serve him and him only. We are all early listed soldiers under Christ's banner by baptism, and sworn to make his laws our rule, and we are the inhabitants of covenanted Scotland, and much contending hath been both in former and latter times, by our fathers for presbyterian principles, many of them "resisting unto blood," against the corruptions and defections of the times, and to convey the precious truths of the gospel to us their wicked and ungrateful posterity. But we, like Ephraim, "have willingly walked after the commandments of men," for which we have reason to fear the Lord will be further provoked to permit men to give us evil laws, both in church and state. The Lord was at much pains from the mouth of Moses his servant, to exhort his church and people to receive his law into their hearts, and teach it diligently unto their children, both in the 6th and 11th chapters of Deuteronomy. They were commanded to lay up the words of the law in their heart and soul, and bind them for a sign upon their hand, that they might be as frontlets between their eyes; and to write them upon their posts and door-posts of their houses, and upon their gates; and to speak of them when sitting in their houses,

houses, in lying down and rising up, and in walking by the way. Many blessings are promised to the obedient, and many curses threatened to the disobedient, in the 28th and 29th chapters of Deuteronomy. O how awful are these judgments, and should certainly alarm us in our dangerous security, considering, that nevertheless of all the care, grace and mercy, the Lord shewed that people, yet the most of them rushed on in a course of disobedience and unbelief to their own ruin and destruction, which is very like to be the case of these lands; we have been and are peculiarly favoured with gospel-privileges beyond almost all nations under heaven. O what an unspeakable mercy, if right improven! if despised, unutterable wo!

The gospel-ministry is maintained by the golden oil of the Spirit, and certainly he will not maintain these lamps for people to work their own works. There is reason to fear, if we believe God to be the same as when his church was in the wilderness, that many of the professors of this day, will not be honoured to see what great things the Lord will yet do for his church in these lands; he that spared not his own Son, when he stood in the law-room of sinners, and spared not meek Moses, whom he knew face to face, and suffered not his sin to pass without marks of his displeasure, if these things were done in the green tree, what will become of the proud, passionate, carnal and self-seeking professors in our times? How justly may Christ upbraid us as he did his disciples, "Have I been so long with you and yet have you not known me?" The great apostle, "counted all things but loss and dung, when compared with the excellency of Christ, and being found in him."—We must be in Christ by faith, and he must dwell in us by his Holy Spirit; O young ones! it is not enough to hear the joyful sound externally, but it must reach our hearts, by a day of power, determining us to receive a whole Christ as he is

is offered to us in the gospel, his natures, offices, and sweet relations, and then to live on him, for him, and to him.

This is a time of great famine of the Spirit, but it is great ground of comfort, that the clouds of the promises are full of rain. "Ask ye of the Lord rain, in the time of the latter rain, so the Lord shall make bright clouds, and give them showers of rain," Zech. x. 1. O that we were better acquaint with the promises, and knew more of turning them into petitions; pray much for the Holy Spirit, the grand New Testament-promise, Luke xi. 13. John xiv. 16, 26. xv. 26. chap. xvi. 7, 13.

O my friends, make a diligent use of all the scriptures, especially the writings of John; he was the beloved disciple, who leaned on Jesus's breast, and had much experience of the love of Christ himself, and could speak the better of it to others, taste and see can tell best; oh! that we should spend so much of our time in pursuing shadows, and so little of it in seeking after the "knowledge of the love of Christ, which passeth knowledge." David "hated the thoughts of vanity, but loved the law of God, and made it his study all the day, and declares the man perfectly blessed, that placeth his delight upon the law of God, and meditates thereon day and night." O parents, permit me, an old dying woman, from a sense of imminent danger on the one hand, and great advantage on the other, humbly to put you in mind of the many solemn obligations you are under to bring up your children to God, and to do your utmost to persuade them to renounce the devil, the world, and the flesh, both by precept and example. The children of old were to ask their parents, what they meant by keeping of the passover, and what meant the twelve stones taken out of the river Jordan, and they were commanded to inform them, from which, and many other

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other scriptures, it is evident, it is a duty binding on the old generation, carefully to instruct the young, and the young diligently to inquire of the old, Psal. lxxviii 5.

*His testimonies and his law
in Israel he did place,
And charg'd our fathers it to show
to their succeeding race, &c.*

This was the Lord's testimony of Abraham, " I know him, that he will command his children, and his household after him, and they shall keep the way of the Lord," Gen. xviii. 19. What good opportunities have you now to inculcate the principles of religion on their young and tender hearts; O for the Lord's sake, for your own and your children's souls sake, embrace and improve these opportunities, if ever reformation prosper in these lands, it must begin at home; of old when they repaired the walls of Jerusalem, every one built before his own door: you, no doubt, are solicitous for food and clothing to your children, and some portion of this world, which is very commendable, but there is something more, for our Saviour says, " What shall a man profit if he should gain the whole world, and lose his own soul?" Mat. xvi. 26. O then, often plead his gracious promise, " I will circumcise thine heart, and the heart of of thy seed, to love the Lord thy God, with all thine heart, and with all thy soul, that thou mayst live," Deut. xxx. 6.

God hath no pleasure in carnal mirth and security at any time, but he is most highly displeased with it at this day, when he is calling so loudly both by his word and providence, (by reason of such a long continued war with

with France, and now when war is proclaimed with Spain) to fasting and mourning, and turning every one of us from our evil ways, and yet notwithstanding of numberless reasons for fasting and humiliation the generation is superstitiously observing days*, which is a sin at all times, but attended with peculiar aggravations at this day; it is a confederating with our superstitious enemies, whom we pretend to fight against, as also eating and drinking in a superstitious manner, and that to excess: oh! we are under great stupidity, in not observing the operations of God's hand, and so provoke him greatly to anger; see the case, and dreadful issue, if mercy prevent not, Isa. xxii. 12. and downwards.' Amos chap. vi—'The Lord calls his people to come out of Babylon, and partake not of her sins, lest they should also receive of her plagues, Rev. xviii. 4.

What I would desire to aim at is, that you my dear friends and acquaintances, would study moderation in the use of things even lawful in themselves, but when they are used either vainly, unnecessarily, or in a superstitious manner, this is abusing the good creatures of God to the dishonour of the giver, forgetting that divine command, "Whether therefore ye eat or drink, or whatsoever ye do, do all to the glory of God," 1 Cor. x. 31. And seeing these awful things are a-waiting the generation, I would fain desire that our hearts were suitably affected therewith, that we may be "prepared, to meet our God," in a way of judgment or mercy, and for this end, let us again by faith presently fly into Christ for hiding in the evil day, "who is a place of refuge, a covert from the storm, when the blast of the terrible ones come."

I have

* Christmas, and other superstitious observances of days.

I have spoke much more on this and other things than I intended; I am aware, that I will be looked upon by some as a fool, and Satan and unbelief is saying so too; I own I deserve the name and much worse. But having so many friends and acquaintances, very suddenly carried off by death in the prime of their youth, and feeling so many symptoms of mortality about myself, and besides, when I reflect, that the Lord long ago, planted in me some desires of usefulness to my relations and acquaintances, and hath more and more increased them, and now by his adorable providence, hath given me this very unexpected liberty and opportunity of recording his loving-kindness: I think it would be very ungrateful to abuse these favours. I might indeed altogether despair of success, did "the power of God consist in the wisdom of man's words, but he hath chosen the foolish and weak things, and things despised, that no flesh should glory in his sight, but that all flesh should glory in the Lord."

I had no thoughts of saying any more, but since the Lord in his adorable providence, who can do nothing wrong, hath taken away my brother and his wife, both in one week by death, leaving behind them five orphan children, I think it my duty yet to speak a word to you.

Dear nephews and orphans,

I Am now deprived of all opportunity to converse any more with your father and mother, in this world; I am now very frail, and know not if ever I will have the opportunity to speak personally with you any more. The Lord is at much pains with us in letting us see so many of our friends suddenly removed by death, which is a certain evidence that God is at earnest to have us awakened. My dear young ones,
pray

pray that you may be helped "to hear the rod; and
 "he who hath appointed it," in trying you so early
 with such an awful stroke; study suitably to improve
 such a providence, neither to be stupid nor unconcerned,
 nor to murmur and fret; "The Lord hath given,
 "and the Lord hath taken, and blessed be the name
 "of the Lord." Beware of charging God foolishly,
 but learn to reverence his sovereign hand in this and
 all the changes of your life; "Acknowledge him in
 "all your ways, and he will direct your steps," Prov.
 iii. 6. Pray often for a blessing upon this, and all the
 providences which befall you. O plead the promise!
 for the Lord hath said, "I will be a father to the
 "fatherless." You were all early given away to the
 Lord in baptism, and listed soldiers under Christ's
 banner. My dear children, you want your parents to
 lay home your baptismal engagements, O that I were
 helped to be your remembrancer, or rather, may the
 Holy Spirit, whose office it is, "teach you all things,
 "and bring all things to your remembrance." Daily
 pray for the blessing upon your baptism, that you may
 receive the inward grace by the outward sign of water,
 that you may be really ingrafted in Christ the true
 vine. O that you may be helped to take him for your
 everlasting Father in Christ, for God is only well pleased
 in him, and with all sinners that come to him by
 Christ, and is not this encouraging for poor sinners?
 This is unspeakable love and mercy indeed. We
 have all lost communion with God in the first Adam,
 and the only way of obtaining it again, is to come in
 by Christ the second Adam, who is both "the door
 "and the way." All that you can possibly want is
 to be found in him; there is none like him, "He is
 "fairer than the sons of men, the chiefest among ten
 "thousand" He is honourable, God equal with the
 Father; he is rich, and eternally enriches all that
 match with him, both loving and lovely, and lives
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for evermore. O close with him ! All of you have some interest in your father's testament, but still there will be something wanting ; come and get an interest in Christ's testament, who died to leave legacies to poor sinners, and again lives for evermore to put and keep them in possession of the same. O my dear friends, I beseech and intreat you for the Lord's sake, your own precious and immortal souls sake, as you and I are to answer before the awful and tremendous tribunal of him who is now our continual witness, and will shortly be our impartial Judge ; bethink yourselves, delay not a moment, it is a matter of the utmost importance, an eternity of misery or happiness depends upon the present moment of time, and thread of life. " Behold, he is yet knocking." O ! open, open, put the case in his own hand. Oh ! provoke not your kind Lord and Saviour, to utter that mournful complaint and awful sentence. " If thou hadst known, " even thou, at least in this thy day, the things which " belong unto thy peace ! but now they are hid from " thine eyes," Luke xix. 42. O be persuaded to dedicate yourselves wholly to God in Christ ; go to him on your knees, and tell him, " Lord, thou made me " and hast brought me hitherto, and thou tells me " in thy word, I am a sinner, but I cannot really believe it ; but thou hast promised thy Spirit to convince me of sin, particularly of that woful sin of " UNBELIEF*, however guilty and filthy I am, thou " gives me great encouragement ; for thy word declares (a) that thou hast no pleasure in the death of " sinners, and that (b) thou art not willing that any " should perish ; and (c) him that cometh unto me I " will in no ways cast out. I see, Lord, thy word " warrants me to come, though a vile sinner ; but I " am neither able nor willing to come ; and indeed " this case thou knows and testifies to be truth. (d)

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* John xvi. 9. (a) Ezek. xxxiii. 11. (b) 2 Pet. iii. 9. John vi. 37. (d) John vi. 44.

" No man can come unto me, except the Father which
 " hath sent me draw him. (e) And you will not
 " come to me, that ye might have life. What can I
 " do, O my soul! I am dead, I cannot move. I am
 " full of enmity, and will not do it, and yet at my
 " eternal peril if I do it not. Whither shall I go,
 " Lord Jesus, but unto thee? For thou hast the
 " words of eternal life: is it not thy faithful word of
 " promise, And I, if I be lifted up from the earth,
 " WILL DRAW all men unto me? (f) Thy people
 " SHALL BE WILLING in the day of thy power. (g)
 " Lord Jesus, be it according to thy word, I believe,
 " help mine unbelief; Lord, I see justice pursuing
 " me, but I am unable to fulfil the law, or bear its
 " curse. Lord Jesus, I flee to thee, to cover me, for
 " (h) mercy and truth are met together, righteousness
 " and peace have kissed each other in thee, I approve
 " of, and rejoice in the happy conjunction, I am con-
 " tent to be drowned in grace's debt for ever. Lord,
 " there is enough in this new covenant, it is free, it
 " is full, yea, it is well ordered in all things, and sure,
 " and now it is become all my salvation, and all my
 " desire. THOU ART WHOLLY MINE, AND I AM
 " WHOLLY THINE." AMEN. Dear friends,
 what I say to one of you I intend it to ALL of you.

I Should now relate some other occurrences in pro-
 vidence, and among others the late ordination at
 Cumbernauld 1760, was very remarkable to me on
 several accounts; but having already been more large
 than expectation, the particular circumstances there-
 of are omitted, together with some other passages, only
 the reader may observe, that Cumbernauld was the
 place where I was first admitted to partake of the
 Lord's supper, and last year being 1761, I was fa-
 voured with the like opportunity in the same place,

(e) John v. 40. (f) John xii. 32. (g) Psal' cx. 3.
 (h) Psal. lxxxv. 10.

which to all human appearance will be the last occasion of that nature to me on earth*, and the Lord now seems to be calling me to take a lasting farewell of all public ordinances. He hath honoured me with many opportunities of keeping up the memory of his dying love, what reason have I to cry with the Psalmist. "Deliver me from blood guiltiness, O God, thou God of my salvation; and my tongue shall sing aloud of thy righteousness," Psal. li. 14. O that I could lie in the dust and be humble, that love hath been, and yet is so little in exercise to him, who hath given so many evidences of his love to the church in general and to me in particular, also for the untenderness of professors, even at sacramental occasions, and we who profess to call ourselves witnesses, oh how lamentable! we come far short of that designation; how do we adventure to go forward to the Lord's table, without spending time in self examination, which is an express command, "Let a man examine himself, and so let him eat," &c. We should not only have grace in habit, but also in exercise, both before, in the time, and after communicating: we are ready to appear a little serious at a sacrament, but presently after, to let down our watch, and turn as remiss, carnal and secure as ever. O how dishonourable to God, and hurtful to ourselves, soul and body! "for this cause many are weak and sickly among you, and many sleep." O how much need of the north and south wind of the Spirit of God, to blow upon us at this day, for the life and power of religion is very much decayed among us! Alas! that the only thing which hath a real existence in the world, should be turned into a mere empty form and shadow!

I shall now conclude, and take farewell of all friends and acquaintances on paper, especially my dear husband, whom I obtained from the Lord.———I desire to bless the Lord, I am heartily content with the

way of infinite Wisdom's conducting me through the wilderness, and I desire to bless him, O help me to praise him, that he ever thought on me, in my low estate, and condescended to call at the door of my heart, by the irresistible power of his Spirit, accompanying his word, making me with Paul, to ly down at his feet, saying, "What wilt thou have me to do?" O what think ye of his love, patience and faithfulnes, that though I have given many squint and back-looks to other idols and lovers, yet he has never parted with me, but "hath taken me by the arms, teaching me to go, as he did Ephraim, even when I knew not that it was he." Not a moment in all my life, but his care hath been about poor unworthy me; free love is the sweet line that runs through from eternity to eternity. O young folk, what think ye of such a Leader, if once you consent to lay your black hand in his white hand, he will not only direct and protect you through all the dark and difficult stages of life, but he will conduct you safely through death and the grave, home to IMMANUEL's land, where the inhabitants shall not say, I am sick.

I have recorded already some scriptures in Revelation, which were sweet to me in the days of my youth, I shall add a few more that were and are pleasant and useful to me, for your encouragement, Rev. 2d, and 3d chapters.

They are a bundle of sweet and precious promises to the overcomer. "To him that overcometh, will I give to eat of the tree of life, which is in the midst of the paradise of God. He that overcometh shall not be hurt of the second death. To him that overcometh will I give to eat of the hidden manna, and will give him a white stone, and in the stone a new name written, which no man knoweth, saving he that receiveth it. He that overcometh and keepeth my works unto the end, to him will I give power over the nations. He that overcometh,

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“eth, the same shall be clothed in white raiment,
 “and I will not blot out his name out of the book
 “of life, but I will confess his Name before my Fa-
 “ther, and before his angels. Him that overcom-
 “eth, will I make a pillar in the temple of my God,
 “and he shall go no more out; and I will write u-
 “pon him the name of my God, and the name of
 “the city of my God, which is new Jerusalem, which
 “cometh down out of heaven from my God; and I
 “will write upon him my new name. To him that
 “overcometh, will I grant to sit with me in my
 “throne, even as I also overcame, and am set down
 “with my father on his throne. Rev. xxi. 7. He that
 “overcometh shall inherit all things, and I will be
 “his God, and he shall be my son.” Are not these
 weighty arguments, to persuade rebel sinners volun-
 tarily to list themselves soldiers under such a noble
 captain, and “fight the good fight of faith?” but
 such is the natural opposition in every one of our
 hearts, that not one of us will come till we be drawn.

O let us plead the promise often, “I, if I be lifted
 “up from the earth, I will draw all men unto me.”
 He hath been lifted upon the cross, and is now upon
 the throne, he hath promised, “Thy people shall
 “be willing in the day of thy power,” Psal. cx. 3.
 O therefore let us neither be afraid nor ashamed to
 fight under such a noble Captain, surely we ought to
 think it our highest attainment and greatest privilege
 to serve such an honourable Master, it is good to
 fight under his banner. He hath already got the
 victory, “He trode the wine press alone, and of the
 “people there was none with him.” “He said on
 “the cross, it is finished.” O my friends read often
 the sixth chapter of the Ephesians, and see how well
 the honest soldiers in his camp are provided with ar-
 mour. Let us lift up our heads and our hearts, for
 there is no armour for our backs: Satan and cor-
 ruption may reel and rage, and cursed unbelief may

stagger us, but hear what our noble Captain says,
 "Be thou faithful unto the death, and will give thee
 "a crown of life."



*A brief Account of the latter Part of the Author's Life,
 and Character.*

IT is judged proper for the satisfaction of the reader, and to complete the narrative, to annex a short account of the author's deportment under her death-bed trouble.

The reader will observe that the author finished her narrative, August 10th, 1762, being then under very much frailty and infirmity; it is not unworthy of attention, that from that day to the time of her death, she was not in a proper capacity for writing any more, on account of her distress.

The origin of the trouble was from a cold, joined with a Sciatic, which at first seized the back, and by reason of the violent fall, which she briefly relates, removed to her right side, and was the seat of the consequent disorders, these humours contracted an ulcer of a large size, and at length issued forth a great quantity of thin limpid humours; the disorder descending a little lower, was attended with exquisite pain, and being opened, she perceived some intermediate relief, and so on interchangeably, during the whole time of her distress, which continued two years and three months, after the completing of her narrative.

As to her deportment under the afflicting hand of God, it was truly Christian; a firm and unshaken faith, humility, submission, patience, contentment, holy fortitude and cheerfulness were very eminent and conspicuous throughout the whole. She was much exercised in admiring at, valuing of, and praising God for the mercies which she enjoyed, both of a tempo-

ral and spiritual nature; and so by endeavouring carefully to observe every instance of kindness, this of itself had a great tendency to alleviate her distress. Her constant and uncommon composure and serenity of mind was remarkable, and even under the many wearisome days and nights of great distress, she was often praising God in the greatest extremity, saying, "It is of the Lord's mercies I am not consumed." He hath done all things well; often singing the 103d Psalm herself, and desiring others to assist her; she acknowledged as her "tribulations abounded, so her consolations also abounded," and enjoyed much of the sweet fruits and benefits that accompany or flow from justification, adoption and sanctification, as they are expressed in the Assemblies shorter Catechism, namely, "Assurance of God's love, peace of conscience, joy in the holy Ghost," &c. and when under temptations to be discouraged, from Satan and corruption, or from the severity and continuance of trouble, she still persisted resolutely professing in spite of all opposition, "I know whom I have believed, and I am persuaded that he is able to keep that which I have committed unto him against that day. And though He should slay me yet will I trust in him." She was peculiarly concerned to suppress all murmuring or complaining, all harsh or low conceptions of God, and for this purpose, made it her daily study and exercise to look upon all her afflictions, as coming from a loving and fatherly hand for holy and wise ends, and as for benefits and blessings secured in the New-Covenant, and so was made often to rejoice in her present and future advantage, saying with the apostle Paul. "My light affliction which is but for a moment, worketh for me a far more exceeding and eternal weight of glory." In fine, you will see her exercise well delineated in three small pieces of Mr. Samuel Shaw, entitled, "A welcome to the plague. A farewell to life. The angelical life." In reading

ing and hearing of these, she enjoyed a peculiar pleasure and satisfaction, joined with *Brown's Life of Faith*.

Not only was it her continual study to be duly exercised under trouble herself, but also an ardent desire, and constant endeavour of usefulness continued to the last, which appears to be a confirmation of what she relates in her narrative, namely of some particular promises of conformity to Christ, of which this seems to have been an eminent and lively instance. The commendation of her good Lord and Master was her delightful and unwearied theme; few or none of her visitors young or old went away without some useful instructions, nay even the beholding of her constancy, fortitude, patience and cheerfulness, was a silent, though a most solemn and instructive lesson and a most convincing evidence of the truth and reality of the Christian religion: an earnest desire remained, and so was peculiarly assisted in it, to bring up a good report of Christ and religion, especially to the young generation, by proposing the most encouraging motives, the necessity and advantages of early piety, and on the other hand endeavouring to alleviate the difficulties, which might occur in the progress of religion, and for this purpose above all, commended and most earnestly recommended *The Life of Faith*, of which she herself was a diligent student, and an eminent proficient, and also met with peculiar tryals of it. It was surprising with what life, fervency and in such nervous strains many times she would readily and fluently discourse on the essential articles of religion, endeavouring to impress her own mind with a lively sense thereof, and in the most convincing and alluring manner inculcate them on others, all expressed in pertinent scripture language, with which she was well acquainted, or from her own experience, of which she was furnished with a rich variety; besides, it was remarkable, that sometimes when under great pain or heavy sickness, if any person had come to visit her, especially

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specially the young, instead of being a burden or uneasiness to speak with them, she found that it had an happy influence very much to revive her spirits, which she thought worthy of observation, and so did not neglect to lay hold on every proper opportunity to be some way useful, as she often expressed in health and sickness. "O to spend and be spent for Christ." Her general request of her visitors was, "Pray for me, and praise God with me, for what he hath done, is doing, and will do."

Nor was an uncommon concern confined to her friends and acquaintances only, but extended to the world in general, and particularly to this church and land, greatly bewailing the wickedness and profanity that so much abounded, with the evident decay of vital religion, and the amazing insensibility and lukewarmness of professors themselves, often expressing her too well grounded apprehensions of some nameless judgments to awaken this secure generation; and was sometimes ready to shrink under the melancholy thoughts thereof, had it not been from the faithful word and promises of God, which absolutely secure the stability and increase of Christ's kingdom. The precious promises were her daily study, how rich a fund of them had she treasured up in her memory? and not only so, but was taught that divine art of extracting by faith from these pipes of communication, "the fulness of him that filleth all in all: the treasures of wisdom and knowledge that are in Christ." The sum of all is, to get God glorified and the generation edified, was her earnest and delightful pursuit.

And with regard to her views of death, the apprehensions of its near approach was a comfortable prospect, "Having a desire to depart, and to be with Christ, which is far better," and as she herself expressed, "How can it be otherwise, for I will never be free of a body of sin, till it come by the hand of death, which will be the final death of all sin: this

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" is meat out of the eater indeed. Sin was the entrance of death, and death the out-going of sin, " and then all distance and absence will be eternally " removed." So that it may be truly said, she was not only content to die, but earnestly panted, longed and groaned, that she " might be clothed upon, and " that mortality might be swallowed up of life." She many times requested for patience to wait as a valiant soldier or centinel upon her watch, " till the appointed time of her change should come," and often comforted herself with these words of our Saviour, " Look up, and lift up your head, for the day of " your redemption draweth nigh:" as also with that comfortable promise, " For yet a little while, and " he that shall come, will come, and will not tarry," Heb. x. 37.

Her animal frame gradually decayed, but the powers and faculties of the soul continued as fresh and vigorous as ever. At length the appointed time of her dissolution drew nigh; and as she was formerly under no disquieting fears of death, so now in the immediate prospect of the king of terrors she shewed a most surprising calmness and serenity of mind, expressing to her near intimates, that she was no more afraid of dying than of speaking with them; but how far different is the magnanimity of the real Christian from the courage, or rather brutality of the heroes of antiquity. She died expressing her firm expectation of the Lord's return, and the revival of religion in these lands. The last day of her life she very much commended the life of faith, and did not appear to have much of the sensible presence of God, but a firm and stedfast faith, and so without uttering a complaint for a smiling gale of sense, but as a bold adventurer, having taken God for her Pilot, and the promise for a compass, undaunted, approached with magnanimity the Jordan of death, trusting the strength of her bottom, the wisdom and faithfulness of her Pilot, and so

safely

safely arrived an unspeakable gainer home to IMMANUEL's happy shore. She fell asleep in the most easy and gentle manner, between sabbath evening and Monday morning November 5th, the end of a Sabbath on earth, and the beginning of an eternal Sabbath in heaven, aged sixty-four years.

With regard to her character, in general, it shall only be observed, that from her infancy, she was not only preserved from gross enormities, but even from the common follies of youth. She was remarkably plain and ingenuous: frequent in solemn and extraordinary addresses to heaven, upon every emergent, followed with eminent, comfortable and confirming testimonies of divine audience and acceptance. A diligent observer and improver of the dispensations of providence, prosperous or adverse, relating to herself, friends, and the public, either in church or state. She was accurately and extensively regardful of the divine law in all manner of life and conversation, even in things that escape the notice of a great part of professed Christians, of a tender conscience, carefully watching against, and avoiding every appearance of evil. She had a singular dexterity in observing the apostolical direction, "Be diligent in business, and fervent in spirit, serving the Lord." And likewise had a peculiar art in spiritualizing temporal things. She was very careful to improve every opportunity of getting or doing good, had a high esteem of precious time, especially the morning-time, and made it her continual study to fill up the least vacancy, fragment or interval thereof, with something useful. Perhaps there is no one character more distinguished and illustrious, that she so much excelled in, than in that short and comprehensive description of our Saviour's life, namely, "Who went about doing good." This was the pattern she assiduously kept in her eye, and endeavoured to copy after. It was her great ambition, ever since she knew any thing of religion herself, to commend her

her good Master to others, especially the young generation, endued with a strong inclination unto, and capacity for teaching the youth not only to read, but instructing them in the principles of religion, with advices and earnest expostulations concerning their soul's state, which may be an abundant apology for the many occasional digressions in her narrative. She was particularly studious to bring all principles and practices to the true TOUCH-STONE, to be tried so far as her capacity would permit, and frequently lamented that she loved not the Lord's people more, and idolized them less, and followed a good man or men any further than they followed the rule of the word. The case of Zion was much at her heart, and often in her mouth to the day of her death. The author acknowledged, that she never enjoyed much of the life of sense, yet seldom shaken about her interest in Christ; she was taught the life of faith in an eminent degree, and thereby was helped to maintain loving and honourable thoughts of God and his ways, even in the darkest providences and frames, which is correspondent to what she frequently said in experience, "That if believers were more diligent in reading and studying their charter and contract, the NEW COVENANT, apprehending and delighting in their Husband CHRIST, what he is in his person, offices, and sweet relations, they would not be so soon shaken with changes of whatever nature." Many other things might have been added, which, for brevity's sake, are omitted; but the memoirs themselves, and the testimonies of many living witnesses, who were intimately acquainted with the author, may be admitted as competent evidences. May we all with the utmost diligence, "be followers of them, who through faith and patience inherit the promises."

THE END.

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